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ENGLISH POEMS

EDITED BY

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AND

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AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

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E-P 4

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PREFACE

To put forth a new anthology just now may seem to imply on the part of the editors a talent for the malapropos that falls little short of positive genius. The editors have, however, felt the need in their own work of an anthology which should combine measurable completeness with an amount of editing sufficient for supplying needed help to the student, and for furnishing material for classroom work.

In the selection of poems the primary aim has been to include the most representative work of the chief British poets, from Chaucer to Tennyson, with a view to presenting material which should at the same time be representative of the successive periods of English literary history and, within certain limitations, of the chief types of poetry. For obvious reasons the drama is wholly unrepresented, and the epic somewhat inadequately by excerpts. That these excerpts are taken from epics less well known than *Paradise Lost* is due to the fact that in the opinion of the editors *Paradise Lost* would lose by being represented by citations even more than do *The Faerie Queene* and *Hudibras*. As a secondary aim the editors have endeavored to include such poems as lend themselves to comparative study. In some instances these two purposes have conflicted. The inclusion, for example, of Lamb's *Sonnet XI* instead of his more famous as well as more representative *The Old Familiar Faces* is partly inconsistent with the general plan of the book, and must seek its justification in the interesting comparison the *Sonnet* affords with other poems expressing the same sense of the holiness of childhood.

The editors are quite aware that in the case of many of the minor poems the wisdom of their choice will be questioned.

Probably no selection of poems, outside those which must of necessity be included in an anthology, would seem to any teacher entirely inevitable. In the choice of poems, upon the relative value of which the verdict has not been final, personal preference must play a considerable part; and perhaps the editors have been unduly hampered by their personal preferences. In some cases they have been influenced in their choice by their experience in teaching, which has led them occasionally to include poems, not so much because they are significant in their relation to literary history or because they lend themselves to a comparative study, as because they have been found interesting to students.

In the editorial work an attempt has been made to avoid the purely informational type of annotation. The aim has been to furnish, wherever possible, suggestions that will enable the student to supply his own notes. Similarly, the questions that accompany the notes are designed to stimulate and suggest thought on the part of both teacher and student rather than to make thinking unnecessary on the part of either. It is the experience of the editors that students are often at a loss as to what they should look for in a piece of literature, and that their uncertainty is even more apparent in the study of poetry than in that of prose. To meet this difficulty the questions have been provided. In some cases they may be unnecessary. In no case are they to be regarded as final or exhaustive.

The editors will welcome friendly criticism and the correction of errors, from which they are not so sanguine as to hope that the book is wholly free.

URBANA, ILLINOIS.

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ENGLISH POEMS

PERIOD OF PREPARATION

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

1340?–1400

NOW WELCOM SOMER

[From *The Parlement of Foules*]

'Now welcom somer with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres weders over-shake,
And driven awey the longe nightes blake!

Seynt Valentyn, that art ful hy on-lofte;—
Thus singen smale foules for thy sake—
Now welcom somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres weders over-shake.

Wel han they cause for to gladen ofte,
Sith ech of hem recovered hath his make;
Ful blisful may they singen whan they wake;
Now welcom somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres weders over-shake,
And driven awey the longe nightes blake.'

THE PROLOGUE

HERE BIGINNETH THE BOOK OF THE TALES OF CAUNTERBURY

WHAN that Aprille with his shoures sote
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale fowles maken melodye,
That slepen al the night with open yë,
(So priketh hem nature in hir corages):
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
(And palmers for to seken straunge strondes)
To ferne halwes, couthe in sondry londes;
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seke.

Bifel that, in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At night was come in-to that hostelrye,
Wel nyne and twenty in a companye,
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle
In felawshipe, and pilgrims were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste.
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon,
That I was of hir felawshipe anon,

And made forward erly for to ryse,
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.
But natheles, whyl I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thinketh it accordaunt to resoun
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degree,
And eek in what array that they were inne:
And at a knight than wol I first biginne.

A KNIGHT ther was and that a worthy man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To ryden out, he loved chivalrye,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisye.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And thereto hadde he riden (no man ferre)
As wel in Cristendom as hethenesse,
And ever honoured for his worthinesse.
At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne;
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle naciouns in Pruce.
In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,—
No Cristen man so ofte of his degree.
In Gernade at the sege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.
At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See
At many a noble aryve hadde he be.
At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
And foughten for oure feith at Tramissene
In listes thryes, and ay slayn his foo.
This ilke worthy knight had been also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye
Ageyn another hethen in Turkye:

And evermore he hadde·a sovereyn prys.
And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
He never yet no vileinye ne sayde,
In al his lyf, un-to no maner wight.
He was a verray parfit, gentil knight.
But for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors were gode, but he was nat gay;
Of fustian he wered a gipoun,
Al bismotered with his habergeoun,
For he was late y-come from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrimage.

* * * * *

Ther was also a NONNE, a PRIORESSE,
That of hir smyling was ful simple and coy;
Hir gretteste ooth was but by sëynt Loy,
And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.
Ful wel she song the service divyne,
Entuned in hir nose ful semely;
And Frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe.
At mete wel y-taught was she with-alle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fingres in hir sauce depe.
Wel coude she carie a morsel and wel kepe,
That no drope ne fille up-on hir brest.
In curteisye was set ful muche hir lest.
Hir over lippe wyped she so clene,
That in hir coppe was no ferthing sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,
And sikerly she was of greet disport,
And ful plesaunt and amiable of port,

And peyned hir to countrefete chere
Of court, and been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But, for to speken of hir conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She wolde wepe, if that she sawe a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
Of smale houndes had she, that she fedde
With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel-breed.
But sore weep she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte:
And al was conscience and tendre herte.
Ful semely hir wimpel pinched was;
Hir nose tretys; hir eyen greye as glas;
Hir mouth ful smal, and ther-to softe and reed;
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;
It was almost a spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetis was hir cloke, as I was war.
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene;
And ther-on heng a broch of gold ful shene,
On which ther was first write a crowned A,
And after *Amor vincit omnia.*
Another NONNE with hir hadde she,
That was hir chapeleyne, and PREESTES three.
A MONK ther was, a fair for the maistrye,
An out-rydere, that lovede venerye;
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable:
And, whan he rood, men mighte his brydel here
Ginglen in a whistling wind as clere,
And eek as loude, as dooth the chapel-belle,
Ther as this lord was keper of the celle.
The reule of seint Maure or of seint Beneit,

By-cause that it was old and som-del streit,
This ilke monk leet olde thinges pace,
And held after the newe world the space.
He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,
That seith that hunters been nat holy men;
Ne that a monk, whan he is cloisterlees,
Is lykned til a fish that is waterlees;
This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloistre.
But thilke text held he nat worth an oistre;
And I seyde, his opinioun was good.
What sholde he studie, and make him-selven wood,
Upon a book in cloistre alwey to poure,
Or swinken with his handes and laboure,
As Austin bit? How shal the world be served?
Lat Austin have his swink to him reserved.
Therfore he was a pricasour aright;
Grehoundes he hadde, as swift as fowel in flight;
Of priking and of hunting for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
I seigh his sleves purfiled at the hond
With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;
And, for to festne his hood under his chin,
He hadde of gold y-wroght a curious pin:
A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled that shoon as any glas,
And eek his face as he had been anoint.
He was a lord ful fat and in good point;
His eyen stepe and rollinge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed;
His botes souple, his hors in greet estat.
Now certeinly he was a fair prelat;
He was nat pale, as a for-pyned goost.
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.

* * * * *

A Clerk ther was of Oxenford also,
That un-to logik hadde longe y-go.
As lene was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake;
But loked holwe, and ther-to soberly.
Ful thredbar was his overest courtepy;
For he had geten him yet no benefyce,
Ne was so worldly for to have offyce.
For him was lever have at his beddes heed
Twenty bokes, clad in blak or reed,
Of Aristotle and his philosophye,
Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrye.
But al be that he was a philosophre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
But al that he mighte of his freendes hente,
On bokes and on lerninge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf hym wher-with to scoleye.
Of studie took he most cure and most hede.
Noght o word spak he more than was nede,
And that was seyd in forme and reverence,
And short and quik and ful of hy sentence.
Souninge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

* * * * *

A Good Wyf was ther of bisyde Bathe,
But she was som-del deef, and that was scathe.
Of clooth-making she hadde swiche an haunt
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In al the parisshe wyf ne was ther noon
That to the offring bifore hir sholde goon;
And if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hir coverchiefs ful fyne were of ground;

I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound,
That on a Sonday were upon hir heed.
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Ful streite y-teyd, and shoos ful moiste and newe.
Bold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,
Housbondes at chirche-dore she hadde fyve,
Withouten other companye in youthe;
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nouthe.
And thryes hadde she been at Ierusalem;
She hadde passed many a straunge streem;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at seint Iame, and at Coloigne.
She coude muche of wandring by the weye.
Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
Upon an amblere esily she sat,
Y-wimpled wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.
In felawschip wel coude she laughe and carpe.
Of remedyes of love she knew per-chaunce,
For she coude of that art the olde daunce.

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a povre PERSOUN of a toun;
But riche he was of holy thoght and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parisshens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient;
And swich he was y-preved ofte sythes.
Ful looth were him to cursen for his tythes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,

Un-to his povre parisshens aboute
Of his offring, and eek of his substaunce.
He coude in litel thing han suffisaunce.
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer a-sonder,
But he ne lafte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
In siknes nor in meschief to visyte
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lyte,
Up-on his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his sheepe he yaf,
That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte;
Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte;
And this figure he added eek ther-to,
That if gold ruste, what shal iren do?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;
And shame it is, if a preest take keep,
A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive
By his clennesse, how that his sheepe shold live.
He sette nat his benefice to hyre,
And leet his sheepe encombred in the myre,
And ran to London, un-to sëynt Poules,
To seken him a chaunterie for soules,
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde;
But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,
So that the wolf ne made it nat miscarie;
He was a shepherde, and no mercenarie.
And though he holy were and vertuous,
He was to sinful man nat despitous,
Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,
But in his teching discreet and benigne.
To drawen folk to heven by fairnesse
By good ensample, was his bisinesse:
But it were any persone obstinat,
What-so he were, of heigh or lowe estat,

Him wolde he snibben sharply for the nones.
A bettre preest, I trowe that nowher noon is.
He wayted after no pompe and reverence,
Ne maked him a spyced conscience,
But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taughte, and first he folwed it him-selve.

* * * * *

Now have I told you shortly, in a clause,
Thestat, tharray, the nombre, and eek the cause
Why that assembled was this companye
In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,
That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle.
But now is tyme to yow for to telle
How that we baren us that ilke night,
Whan we were in that hostelrye alight.
And after wol I telle of our viage,
And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage.

* * * * *

Greet chere made our hoste us everichon,
And to the soper sette he us anon;
And served us with vitaille at the beste.
Strong was the wyn, and wel to drinke us leste.
A semely man our hoste was with-alle
For to han been a marshal in an halle;
A large man he was, with eyen stepe,
A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe:
Bold of his speche, and wys, and wel y-taught
And of manhod him lakkede right naught.
Eek therto he was right a mery man,
And after soper pleyen he bigan,
And spak of mirthe amonges othere thinges,
Whan that we hadde maad our rekeninges;
And seyde thus: 'Now, lordinges, trewely,
Ye been to me right welcome, hertely:

For by my trouthe, if that I shall nat lye,
I ne saugh this yeer so mery a companye
At ones in this herberwe as is now.
Fayn wolde I doon yow mirthe, wiste I how.
And of a mirthe I am right now bithoght,
To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.
Ye goon to Caunterbury; God yow spede,
The blisful martir quyte yow your mede.
And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;
For trewely, confort ne mirthe is noon
To ryde by the weye doumb as a stoon;
And therfore wol I maken yow disport,
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort.
And if yow lyketh alle, by oon assent,
Now for to stonden at my Iugement,
And for to werken as I shal yow seye,
To-morwe, whan ye ryden by the weye,
Now, by my fader soule, that is deed,
But ye be mery, I wol yeve yow myn heed.
Hold up your hond, withouten more speche.'
Our conseil was nat longe for to seche;
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys,
And graunted him withouten more avys,
And bad him seye his verdit, as him leste.
'Lordinges,' quod he, 'now herkneth for the beste;
But tak it not, I prey yow, in desdeyn;
This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,
That ech of yow, to shorte with youre weye,
In this viage, shal telle tales tweye,
To Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,
And hom-ward he shal tellen othere two,
Of aventures that whylom han bifalle.
And which of yow that bereth him best of alle,
That is to seyn, that telleth in this cas

Tales of best sentence, and most solas,
Shal have a soper at our aller cost
Here in this place, sittinge by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
And, for to make yow the more mery,
I wol my-selven gladly with yow ryde,
Right at myn owne cost, and be your gyde;
And who-so wol my Iugement withseye
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
And if ye vouche-sauf that it be so,
Tel me anon, with-outen wordes mo,
And I wol erly shape me therfore.'
This thing was graunted, and oure othes swore
With ful glad herte, and preyden him also
That he wold vouche-sauf for to do so,
And that he wolde been our governour,
And of our tales Iuge and reportour,
And sette a soper at a certeyn prys;
And we wold reuled been at his devys,
In heigh and lowe; and thus, by oon assent,
We been acorded to his Iugement.
And ther-up-on the wyn was fet anon;
We dronken, and to reste wente echon,
With-outen any lenger taryinge.

BALLADS

KEMP OWYNE

Her mother died when she was young
  Which gave her cause to make great moan;
Her father married the warst woman
  That ever lived in Christendom.

She served her with foot and hand,
  In every thing that she could dee,
Till once, in an unlucky time,
  She threw her in ower Craigy's sea.

Says, 'Lye you there, dove Isabel,
  And all my sorrows lye with thee;
Till Kemp Owyne come ower the sea,
  And borrow you with kisses three:
Let all the warld do what they will,
  Oh borrowed shall you never be.'

Her breath grew strang, her hair grew lang,
  And twisted thrice about the tree,
And all the people, far and near,
  Thought that a savage beast was she.

The news did come to Kemp Owyne,
  Where he lived far beyond the sea;
He hastened him to Craigy's sea,
  And on the savage beast lookt he.

Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted was about the tree,
And with a swing she came about:
'Come to Craigy's sea, and kiss with me.

'Here is a royal belt,' she cried,
'That I have found in the green sea;
And while your body it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be;
But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I vow my belt your death shall be.'

He steppèd in, gave her a kiss,
The royal belt he brought him wi;
Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted twice about the tree,
And with a swing she came about:
'Come to Craigy's sea, and kiss with me.

'Here is a royal ring,' she said,
'That I have found in the green sea;
And while your finger it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be;
But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I swear my ring your death shall be.'

He steppèd in, gave her a kiss,
The royal ring he brought him wi;
Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted ance about the tree,
And with a swing she came about:
'Come to Craigy's sea, and kiss with me.

'Here is a royal brand,' she said,
'That I have found in the green sea;
And while your body it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be;

But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I swear my brand your death shall be.'

He steppèd in, gave her a kiss,
The royal brand he brought him wi ;
Her breath was sweet, her hair grew short,
And twisted nane about the tree ;
And smilingly she came about,
As fair a woman as could be.

HELEN OF KIRCONNELL

PART SECOND

(From Scott's *Border Minstrelsy*, 1802–3)

I WISH I were where Helen lies !
Night and day on me she cries ;
O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirconnell Lee !

Curst be the heart that thought the thought,
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
And died to succour me !

O think na ye my heart was sair,
When my love dropt down and spak nae mair !
There did she swoon wi' mickle care
On fair Kirconnell Lee.

As I went down the water-side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell Lee !

I lighted down, my sword did draw,
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O, Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll make a garland of thy hair,
Shall bind my heart for evermair,
Until the day I die!

O that I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, 'Haste, and come to me!'

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I were blest,
Where thou lies low, and takes thy rest,
On fair Kirconnel Lee.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding sheet drawn ower my een,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell Lee.

I wish I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me.

ROBIN HOOD AND GUY OF GISBORNE

When shawes beene sheene, and shradds full fayre,
And leeves both large and longe,
Itt is merry, walking in the fayre fforrest,
To heare the small birds songe.

The woodweele sang, and wold not cease,
Amongst the leaves a lyne;
And it is by two wight yeomen,
By deare God, that I meane.

* * * * *

'Me thought they did mee beate and binde,
And tooke my bow mee froe;
If I bee Robin a-live in this lande,
I'le be wrocken on both them towe.'

'Sweavens are swift, master,' quoth John,
'As the wind that blowes ore a hill;
Ffor if itt be never soe lowde this night,
To-morrow it may be still.'

'Buske yee, bowne yee, my merry men all,
For John shall goe with mee;
For I'le goe seeke yond wight yeomen
In greenwood where they bee.'

They cast on their gowne of greene,
A shooting gone are they,
Until they came to the merry greenwood,
Where they had gladdest bee;
There were they ware of a wight yeoman,
His body leaned to a tree.

A sword and a dagger he wore by his side,
Had beene many a man's bane,
And he was cladd in his capull-hyde,
Topp, and tayle, and mayne.

'Stand you still, master,' quoth Little John,
'Under this trusty tree,
And I will goe to yond wight yeoman,
To know his meaning trulye.'

'A, John, by me thou setts noe store,
And that's a ffarley thinge;
How offt send I my men beffore,
And tarry my-selfe behinde?

'It is noe cunning a knave to ken,
And a man but heare him speake;
And itt were not for bursting of my bowe,
John, I wold thy head breake.'

But often words they breeden bale,
That parted Robin and John;
John is gone to Barnesdale,
The gates he knowes eche one.

And when hee came to Barnesdale,
Great heavinesse there hee hadd;
He ffound two of his fellowes
Were slaine both in a slade,

And Scarlett a-ffoote flyinge was,
Over stockes and stone,
For the sheriffe with seven score men
Fast after him is gone.

'Yett one shoote I'le shoote,' sayes Little John,
'With Crist his might and mayne;
I'le make yond fellow that flyes soe fast
To be both glad and ffaine.'

John bent up a good veiwe bow,
And ffettled him to shoote;
The bow was made of a tender boughe,
And fell downe to his foote.

'Woe worth thee, wicked wood,' sayd Little John,
'That ere thou grew on a tree!

For this day thou art my bale,
My boote when thou shold bee!'

This shoote it was but looselye shott,
The arrowe flew in vaine,
And it mett one of the sheriffes men;
Good William a Trent was slaine.

It had beene better for William a Trent
To hange upon a gallowe
Then for to lye in the greenwoode,
There slaine with an arrowe.

And it is sayd, when men be mett,
Six can doe mere than three:
And they have tane Little John,
And bound him ffast too a tree.

'Thou shalt be drawen by dale and downe,'
Quothe the sheriffe,
'And hanged hye on a hill:'
'But thou may ffayle,' quoth Little John,
'If itt be Christ's owne will.'

Let us leave talking of Little John,
For hee is bound fast to a tree,
And talke of Guy and Robin Hood
In the greenwoode where they bee.

How these two yeomen together they mett,
Under the leaves of lyne,
To see what marchandise they made
Even at that same time.

'Good morrow, good fellow,' quoth Sir Guy;
'Good morrow, good ffellow,' quothe hee;
'Methinks by this bow thou beares in thy hand,
A good archer thou seems to bee.

'I am wilfull of my way,' quote Sir Guye,
'And of my morning tyde:'
'I'le lead thee through the wood,' quoth Robin,
'Good ffellow, I'le be thy guide.'

'I seeke an outlaw,' quoth Sir Guye,
'Men call him Robin Hood;
I had rather meet with him upon a day
Then forty pound of golde.'

'If you tow mett, itt wold be seene whether were better
Afore yee did part awaye;
Let us some other pastime find,
Good ffellow, I thee pray.

'Let us some other masteryes make,
And wee will walke in the woods even;
Wee may chance meet with Robin Hoode
Att some unsett steven.'

They cut them downe the summer shroggs
Which grew both under a bryar,
And sett them three score rood in twinn,
To shoote the prickes full neare.

'Leade on, good ffellow,' sayd Sir Guye,
'Leade on, I doe bidd thee:'
'Nay, by my faith,' quoth Robin Hood,
'The leader thou shall bee.'

The first good shoot that Robin ledd,
Did not shoote an inch the pricke ffroe;
Guy was an archer good enoughe,
But he cold neere shoote soe.

The second shoote Sir Guy shott,
He shott within the garlande;

But Robin Hoode shott it better than hee,
For he clove the good pricke-wande.

'God's blessing on thy heart!' sayes Guye,
'Goode ffellow, thy shooting is goode;
For an thy hart be as good as thy hands,
Thou wert better than Robin Hood.

'Tell me thy name, good ffellow,' quoth Guy,
'Under the leaves of the lyne:'
'Nay, by my faith,' quoth good Robin,
'Till thou have told me thine.'

'I dwell by dale and downe,' quoth Guye,
'And I have done many a curst turne;
And he that calles me by my right name,
Calls me Guye of good Gysborne.'

'My dwelling is in the wood,' sayes Robin;
'By thee I set right nought;
My name is Robin Hood of Barnesdale,
A ffellow thou hast long sought.'

He that had neither beene a kithe nor kin
Might have seene a full fayre sight,
To see how together these yeoman went,
With blades both browne and bright.

To have seene how these yeomen together fought
Two howers of a summer's day;
Itt was neither Guy nor Robin Hood
That ffettled them to flye away.

Robin was reacheles on a roote,
And stumbled at that tyde,
And Guy was quicke and nimble with-all,
And hitt him ore the left side.

'Ah, deere Lady!' sayd Robin Hoode,
'Thou art both mother and may!
I thinke it was never man's destinye
To dye before his day.'

Robin thought on Our Lady deere,
And soone leapt up againe,
And thus he came with an awkwarde stroke;
Good Sir Guy hee has slayne.

He tooke Sir Guy's head by the hayre,
And sticked itt on his bowe's end:
'Thou hast beene traytor all thy liffe,
Which thing must have an ende.'

Robin pulled forth an Irish kniffe,
And nicked Sir Guy in the fface,
That hee was never on a woman borne
Cold tell who Sir Guye was.

Saies, 'Lye there, lye there, good Sir Guye,
And with me be not wrothe;
If thou have had the worse stroakes at my hand,
Thou shalt have the better cloathe.'

Robin did off his gowne of greene,
Sir Guye hee did it throwe;
And hee put on that cappull-hyde
That cladd him topp to toe.

'The bowe, the arrowes, and litle horne,
And with me now I'le beare;
Ffor now I will goe to Barnesdale,
To see how my men doe ffare.'

Robin sett Guye's horne to his mouth,
A lowd blast in it he did blow;

That beheard the sheriffe of Nottingham,
As he leaned under a lowe.

'Hearken! hearken!' sayd the sheriffe,
'I heard noe tydings but good;
For yonder I heare Sir Guy's horne blowe,
For he hath slaine Robin Hoode.

'For yonder I heare Sir Guy's horne blow,
Itt blowes soe well in tyde,
For yonder comes that wighty yeoman,
Cladd in his capull-hyde.

'Come hither, thou good Sir Guy,
Aske of mee what thou wilt have:'
'I'le none of thy gold,' sayes Robin Hood,
'Nor I'le none of itt have.

'But now I have slaine the master,' he sayd,
'Let me goe strike the knave;
This is all the reward I aske,
Nor noe other will I have.'

'Thou art a madman,' said the sheriffe,
'Thou sholdest have had a knight's ffee;
Seeing thy asking hath beene soe badd,
Well granted it shall be.'

But Little John heard his master speake,
Well he knew that was his steven;
'Now shall I be loset,' quoth Little John,
'With Christs might in heaven.'

But Robin hee hyed him towards Little John,
Hee thought hee wold loose him belive;
The sheriffe and all his companye
Fast after him did drive.

'Stand abacke! stand abacke!' sayd Robin;
'Why draw you mee soe neere?
Itt was never the use in our countrye
One's shrift another shold heere.'

But Robin pulled forth an Irysh kniffe,
And losed John hand and ffoote,
And gave him Sir Guye's bow in his hand,
And bade it be his boote.

But John tooke Guye's bow in his hand
(His arrowes were rawstye by the roote);
The sheriffe saw Little John draw a bow
And ffettle him to shoote.

Towards his house in Nottingham
He ffled full fast away,
And soe did all his companye,
Not one behind did stay.

But he cold neither soe fast goe,
Nor away soe fast runn,
But Little John, with an arrow broade,
Did cleave his heart in twinn.

SIR THOMAS WYATT

1503–1542

A RENOUNCING OF LOVE

Farewell, Love, and all thy laws forever!
Thy baited hooks shall tangle me no more:
Senec and Plato call me from thy lore
To perfect wealth my wit for to endeavor.
In blind error when I did persèver,
Thy sharp repulse, that pricketh aye so sore,
Taught me in trifles that I set no store;
But 'scaped forth thence since, liberty is lever.
Therefore, farewell! go trouble younger hearts,
And in me claim no more authority.
With idle youth go use thy property,
And thereon spend thy many brittle darts;
For hitherto though I have lost my time,
Me list no longer rotten boughs to climb.

A DESCRIPTION OF SUCH A ONE AS HE WOULD LOVE

A face that should content me wondrous well,
Should not be fair, but lovely to behold,
Of lively look, all grief for to repell,
With right good grace, so would I that it should
Speak without word, such words as none can tell;
The tress also should be of crispèd gold.
With wit and these perchance I might be tied,
And knit again with knot that should not slide.

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY

1517?–1547

DESCRIPTION OF SPRING

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,
With green hath clad the hill, and eke the vale.
The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
The turtle to her make hath told her tale.
Summer is come, for every spray now springs,
The hart hath hung his old head on the pale;
The buck in brake his winter coat he slings;
The fishes flete with new repairèd scale;
The adder all her slough away she slings;
The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale;
The busy bee her honey now she mings;
Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.
And thus I see among these pleasant things
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs!

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

1552?–1618

THE LIE

Go, Soul, the body's guest,
  Upon a thankless arrant!
Fear not to touch the best;
  The truth shall be thy warrant:
Go, since I needs must die,
And give the world the lie.

Say to the court it glows
  And shines like rotten wood;
Say to the church it shows
  What's good, and doth no good:
If court and church reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell potentates they live
  Acting by others' action,
Not loved unless they give,
  Not strong but by a faction.
If potentates reply,
Give potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition
  That manage the estate,
Their purpose is ambition,
  Their practice only hate:
And if they make reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell them that brave it most,
  They beg for more by spending,

Who, in their greatest cost,
Seek nothing but commending:
And if they make reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell zeal it wants devotion;
Tell love it is but lust;
Tell time it is but motion;
Tell flesh it is but dust:
And wish them not reply,
For thou must give the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth;
Tell honor how it alters;
Tell beauty how she blasteth;
Tell favor how it falters:
And as they shall reply,
Give every one the lie.

Tell wit how much it wrangles
In tickle points of niceness;
Tell wisdom she entangles
Herself in over-wiseness:
And when they do reply,
Straight give them both the lie.

Tell physic of her boldness;
Tell skill it is pretension;
Tell charity of coldness;
Tell law it is contention:
And as they do reply,
So give them still the lie.

Tell fortune of her blindness;
Tell nature of decay;
Tell friendship of unkindness;
Tell justice of delay:

And if they will reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell arts they have no soundness,
  But vary by esteeming;
Tell schools they want profoundness,
  And stand too much on seeming:
If arts and schools reply,
Give arts and schools the lie.

Tell faith it's fled the city;
  Tell how the country erreth;
Tell manhood shakes off pity;
  Tell virtue least preferreth:
And if they do reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

So when thou hast, as I
  Commanded thee, done blabbing,—
Although to give the lie
  Deserves no less than stabbing,—
Stab at thee, he that will,
No stab the soul can kill.

EVEN SUCH IS TIME

Even such is time, that takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust;
Who, in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days:
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

EDMUND SPENSER

1552?–1599

PROTHALAMION

Calme was the day, and through the trembling ayre
Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play,
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
Hot Titans beames, which then did glyster fayre;
When I, whom sullein care,
Through discontent of my long fruitlesse stay
In princes court, and expectation vayne
Of idle hopes, which still doe fly away,
Like empty shadowes, did afflict my brayne
Walkt forth to ease my payne
Along the shoare of silver streaming Themmes;
Whose rutty bancke, the which his river hemmes,
Was paynted all with variable flowers,
And all the meades adornd with daintie gemmes
Fit to decke maydens bowres,
And crowne their paramours,
Against the brydale day, which is not long:
Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

There, in a meadow, by the rivers side,
A flocke of Nymphs I chauncèd to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks, all loose untyde,
As each had been a bryde;
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs, entraylèd curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket,
And with fine fingers cropt full feateously
The tender stalkes on hye.

Of every sort, which in that meadow grew
They gathered some; the violet, pallid blew,
The little dazie, that at evening closes,
The virgin lillie, and the primrose trew,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegroomes posies
Against the brydale day, which was not long:
Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two Swannes of goodly hewe
Come softly swimming downe along the lee:
Two fairer birds I yet did never see;
The snow which doth the top of Pindus strew
Did never whiter shew,
Nor Jove himselfe when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
Yet Leda was, they say, as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing neare:
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle streame, the which them bare,
Seem'd foule to them, and bade his billowes spare
To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
Soyle their fayre plumes with water not so fayre,
And marre their beauties bright,
That shone as heavens light,
Against their brydale day, which was not long:
Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

Eftsoones, the Nymphes, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood,
As they came floating on the cristal flood;
Whom, when they sawe, they stood amazèd still,
Their wondring eyes to fill.
Them seem'd they never saw a sight so fayre
Of fowles so lovely, that they sure did deeme

Them heavenly borne, or to be that same payre
Which through the skie draw Venus silver teeme ;
For sure they did not seeme
To be begot of any earthly seede,
But rather angels, or of angels breede ;
Yet were they bred of Somers-heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weede
The earth did fresh aray ;
So fresh they seem'd as day,
Even as their brydale day, which was not long :
Sweet Themmes ! runne softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odours yeild,
All which upon these goodly birds they threw,
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus waters they did seeme,
When downe along by pleasant Tempes shore,
Scattred with flowres, through Thessaly they streeme,
That they appeare through lillies plenteous store,
Like a brydes chamber flore.
Two of those Nymphes mean while, two garlands bound
Of freshest flowres which in that mead they found,
The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowie foreheads therewithall they crownd
Whilst one did sing this lay,
Prepard against that day,
Against their brydale day, which was not long :
Sweet Themmes ! runne softly, till I end my song.

' Ye gentle birdes ! the worlds faire ornament,
And heavens glorie, whom this happie hower
Doth leade unto your lovers blissfull bower,
Joy may you have, and gentle hearts content
Of your loves couplement !

And let faire Venus, that is Queene of Love,
With her heart-quelling sonne upon you smile,
Whose smile they say, hath vertue to remove
All loves dislike, and friendships faultie guile
For ever to assoile.
Let endlesse peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessed plentie wait upon your bord;
And let your bed with pleasures chast abound,
That fruitfule issue may to you afford,
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joyes redound
Upon your brydale day, which is not long:
Sweet Themmes! runne softlie, till I end my song.'

So ended she: and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong,
Which said their bridale day should not be long:
And gentle Eccho from the neighbour ground
Their accents did resound.
So forth these joyous birdes did passe along,
Adowne the lee, that to them murmurde low,
As he would speake, but that he lackt a tong,
Yet did by signes his glad affection show,
Making his streame run slow.
And all the foule which in his flood did dwell
Gan flock about these twaine, that did excell
The rest so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they, enrangèd well,
Did on these two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

At length they all to mery London came,
To mery London, my most kyndly nurse,

That to me gave this lifes first native sourse,
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of auncient fame:
There when they came whereas those bricky towres
The which on Themmes brode, agèd backe doe ryde,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers, —
There whylome wont the Templer Knights to byde,
Till they decayd through pride, —
Next whereunto there standes a stately place,
Where oft I gaynèd gifts and goodly grace
Of that great lord, which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my freendles case:
But ah! here fits not well
Olde woes, but joyes, to tell,
Against the brydale daye, which is not long.
Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great Englands glory, and the worlds wide wonder,
Whose dreadfull name late through all Spaine did thunder,
And Hercules two pillors standing neere
Did make to quake and feare.
Faire branch of honour, flower of chevalrie!
That fillest England with thy triumphes fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victorie,
And endlesse happinesse of thine owne name,
That promiseth the same;
That through thy prowesse, and victorious armes,
Thy country may be freed from forraine harmes,
And great Elisaes glorious name may ring
Through al the world, fil'd with thy wide alarmes,
Which some brave Muse may sing
To ages following.
Upon the brydale day, which is not long:
Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issùing,
Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hayre
In th' ocean billowes he hath bathèd fayre,
Descended to the river's open vewing,
With a great traine ensuing.
Above the rest were goodly to bee seene
Two gentle Knights of lovely face and feature,
Beseeming well the bower of any queene,
With gifts of wit, and ornaments of nature
Fit for so goodly stature,
That like the twins of Jove they seem'd in sight,
Which decke the bauldricke of the heavens bright.
They two, forth pacing to the rivers side,
Receiv'd those two faire brides, their loves delight,
(Which, at th' appointed tyde,
Each one did make his bryde)
Against their brydale day, which is not long:
Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

THE FAERIE QUEENE

BOOK II, CANTO VI

Guyon is of immodest Merth
Led into loose desyre;
Fights with Cymochles, whiles his brother burns in furious fyre.

I

A HARDER lesson to learne Continence
In joyous pleasure then in grievous paine;
For sweetnesse doth allure the weaker sence
So strongly, that uneathes it can refraine
From that which feeble nature covets faine:
But griefe and wrath, that be her enemies
And foes of life, she better can abstaine:

Yet vertue vauntes in both her victories,
And Guyon in them all shewes goodly maysteries.

II

Whom bold Cymochles traveiling to finde,
With cruell purpose bent to wreake on him
The wrath which Atin kindled in his mind,
Came to a river, by whose utmost brim
Wayting to passe, he saw whereas did swim
Along the shore, as swift as glaunce of eye,
A little Gondelay, bedeckèd trim
With boughes and arbours woven cunningly,
That like a little forest seemèd outwardly.

III

And therein sate a Lady fresh and fayre,
Making sweet solace to herselfe alone:
Sometimes she song as lowd as larke in ayre,
Sometimes she laught, as merry as Pope Jone;
Yet was there not with her else any one,
That to her might move cause of meriment:
Matter of merth enough, though there were none,
She could devise; and thousand waies invent
To feede her foolish humour and vaine jolliment.

IV

Which when far off Cymochles heard and saw,
He lowdly cald to such as were abord
The little barke unto the shore to draw,
And him to ferry over that deepe ford.
The merry mariner unto his word
Soone hearkned, and her painted bote streightway
Turnd to the shore, where that same warlike Lord
She in receiv'd; but Atin by no way
She would admit, albe the knight her much did pray.

V

Eftsoones her shallow ship away did slide,
More swift then swallow sheres the liquid skye,
Withouten oare or Pilot it to guide,
Or wingèd canvas with the wind to fly:
Onely she turnd a pin, and by and by
It cut away upon the yielding wave,
Ne carèd she her course for to apply;
For it was taught the way which she would have,
And both from rocks and flats it selfe could wisely save.

VI

And all the way the wanton Damsell found
New merth her passenger to entertaine;
For she in pleasaunt purpose did abound,
And greatly joyèd merry tales to faine,
Of which a store-house did with her remaine:
Yet seemèd, nothing well they her became;
For all her wordes she drownd with laughter vaine,
And wanted grace in utt'ring of the same,
That turnèd all her pleasaunce to a scoffing game.

VII

And other whiles vaine toyes she would devize,
As her fantasticke wit did most delight:
Sometimes her head she fondly would aguize
With gaudy girlonds, or fresh flowrets dight
About her necke, or rings of rushes plight:
Sometimes, to do him laugh, she would assay
To laugh at shaking of the leavès light
Or to behold the water worke and play
About her little frigot, therein making way.

VIII

Her light behaviour and loose dalliaunce
Gave wondrous great contentment to the knight,
That of his way he had no sovenaunce,
Nor care of vow'd revenge and cruell fight,
But to weake wench did yield his martiall might:
So easie was to quench his flamèd minde
With one sweete drop of sensuall delight,
So easie is t'appease the stormy winde
Of malice in the calme of pleasaunt woman-kind.

IX

Diverse discourses in their way they spent;
Mongst which Cymochles of her questionèd
Both what she was, and what that usage ment,
Which in her cott she daily practizèd?
'Vaine man,' (saide she) 'that wouldest be reckonèd
A straunger in thy home, and ignoraunt
Of Phædria, (for so my name is red)
Of Phædria, thine owne fellow servaunt;
For thou to serve Acrasia thy selfe doest vaunt.

X

'In this wide Inland sea, that hight by name
The Idle lake, my wandring ship I row,
That knowes her port, and thither sayles by ayme,
Ne care, ne feare I how the wind do blow,
Or whether swift I wend, or whether slow:
Both slow and swift alike do serve my tourne;
Ne swelling Neptune ne lowd thundring Jove
Can chaunge my cheare, or make me ever mourne:
My little boat can safely passe this perilous bourne.'

XI

Whiles thus she talked, and whiles thus she toyd,
They were far past the passage which he spake,
And come unto an Island waste and voyd,
That floated in the midst of that great lake;
There her small Gondelay her port did make,
And that gay payre, issewing on the shore,
Disburdned her. Their way they forward take
Into the land that lay them faire before,
Whose pleasaunce she him shewd, and plentifull great store.

XII

It was a chosen plott of fertile land,
Emongst wide waves sett, like a litle nest,
As if it had by Natures cunning hand
Bene choycely pickèd out from all the rest,
And laid forth for ensample of the best:
No daintie flowre or herbe that growes on grownd,
No arborett with painted blossomes drest
And smelling sweete, but there it might be fownd
To bud out faire, and throwe her sweete smels al arownd.

XIII

No tree whose braunches did not bravely spring;
No braunch whereon a fine bird did not sitt;
No bird but did her shrill notes sweetely sing;
No song but did containe a lovely ditt.
Trees, braunches, birds, and songs, were framèd fitt
For to allure fraile mind to carelesse ease:
Carelesse the man soone woxe, and his weake witt
Was overcome of thing that did him please;
So pleasèd did his wrathfull purpose faire appease.

XIV

Thus when shee had his eyes and sences fed
With false delights, and fild with pleasures vayn,
Into a shady dale she soft him led,
And layd him downe upon a grassy playn;
And her sweete self without dread or disdayn
She sett beside, laying his head disarmd
In her loose lap, it softly to sustayn,
Where soone he slumbred fearing not be harmd:
The whiles with a love lay she thus him sweetly charmd.

XV

'Behold, O man! that toilesome paines doest take,
The flowrs, the fields, and all that pleasaunt growes,
How they them selves doe thine ensample make,
Whiles nothing envious nature them forth throwes
Out of her fruitfull lap; how no man knowes.
They spring, they bud, they blossome fresh and faire,
And decke the world with their rich pompous showes;
Yet no man for them taketh paines or care,
Yet no man to them can his carefull paines compare.

XVI

'The lilly, Lady of the flowring field,
The flowre-deluce, her lovly Paramoure,
Bid thee to them thy fruitlesse labors yield,
And soone leave off this toylsome weary stoure:
Loe, loe! how brave she decks her bounteous boure,
With silkin curtens and gold coverletts,
Therein to shrowd her sumptuous Belamoure;
Yet nether spinnes nor cards, ne cares nor fretts,
But to her mother Nature all her care she letts.

XVII

'Why then doest thou, O man! that of them all
Art Lord, and eke of nature Soveraine,
Wilfully make thyselfe a wretched thrall,
And waste thy joyous howres in needelesse paine,
Seeking for daunger and adventures vaine?
What bootes it al to have, and nothing use?
Who shall him rew that swimming in the maine
Will die for thirst, and water doth refuse?
Refuse such fruitlesse toile, and present pleasures chuse.'

XVIII

By this she had him lullèd fast asleepe,
That of no worldly thing he care did take:
Then she with liquors strong his eies did steepe,
That nothing should him hastily awake.
So she him lefte, and did her selfe betake
Unto her boat again, with which she clefte
The slouthfull wave of that great griesy lake:
Soone shee that Island far behind her lefte,
And now is come to that same place where first she wefte.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

1554–1586

A DITTY

My true love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
There never was a bargain better driven:
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

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His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his because in me it bides:
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

SONNET XXXI

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What, may it be that even in heav'nly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries!
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case,
I read it in thy looks; thy languished grace,
To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.
Then, ev'n of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be lov'd, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?

JOHN LYLY

1554?–1606

APELLES' SONG

[From *Alexander and Campaspe*]

Cupid and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses; Cupid paid.
He stakes his quiver, bow and arrows,
His mother's doves, and team of sparrows;
Loses them too; then down he throws

The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how),
With these, the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple of his chin;
All these did my Campaspe win.
At last he set her both his eyes,
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
O Love! has she done this to thee?
What shall, alas! become of me?

MICHAEL DRAYTON

1563–1631

SONNET LXI

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part!
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free;
Shake hands forever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes, —
Now if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

TO THE CAMBRO-BRITONS AND THEIR HARP, HIS BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

Fair stood the wind for France,
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
  Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train,
  Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marcheth tow'rds Agincourt
  In happy hour;
Skirmishing day by day,
With those that stopp'd his way,
Where the French gen'ral lay
  With all his power.

Which in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
  To the king sending.
Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile
  Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
'Though they to one be ten,
  Be not amazèd.
Yet have we well begun,

Battles so bravely won,
Have ever to the sun
  By fame been raisèd.

'And for myself' (quoth he),
'This my full rest shall be,
England ne'er mourn for me,
  Nor more esteem me.
Victor I will remain,
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
  Loss to redeem me.

'Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell,
  No less our skill is,
Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat
  Lopp'd the French lilies.'

The Duke of York so dread
The eager vanward led,
With the main, Henry sped,
  Amongst his hench-men.
Exeter had the rear,
A braver man not there,
O Lord, how hot they were,
  On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
Armor on armor shone,
Drum now to drum did groan,
  To hear was wonder;

That with the cries they make,
The very earth did shake,
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
  Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which didst the signal aim
  To our hid forces ;
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
  Stuck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung,
  Piercing the weather ;
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts,
  Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbos drew,
And on the French they flew,
  Not one was tardy ;
Arms from the shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went,
  Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king,
His broad sword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding,
  As to o'erwhelm it,

And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
  Bruisèd his helmet.

Gloucester, that duke so good,
Next to the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
  With his brave brother;
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
  Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
  Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby,
Bare them right doughtily,
  Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay
  To England to carry;
O when shall English men,
With such acts fill a pen,
Or England breed again
  Such a King Harry?

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

1564–1616

SONNETS

XXIX

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries
And look upon myself and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

XXX

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er

The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

XXXIII

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendor on my brow;
But, out, alack! he was but one hour mine;
The region cloud hath masked him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

LXXIII

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death bed whereon it must expire
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by.

This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixèd mark
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

A MADRIGAL

[From *The Passionate Pilgrim*]

Crabbed Age and Youth
Cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame:
Youth is hot and bold,

Age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild, and Age is tame: —
Age, I do ahhor thee;
Youth, I do adore thee;
O! my Love, my Love is young!
Age, I do defy thee —
O, sweet shepherd, hie thee,
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

WHEN ICICLES HANG BY THE WALL

[From *Love's Labour's Lost*]

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit, tu-who!
A merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow
And coughing drowns the parson's saw
And birds sit brooding in the snow
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit, tu-who!
A merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

TELL ME, WHERE IS FANCY BRED

[From *The Merchant of Venice*]

Tell me, where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart, or in the head?
How begot, how nourishèd?
Reply, reply.

It is engendered in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies:
Let us all ring fancy's knell;
I'll begin it,— Ding, dong, bell.
Ding, dong, bell.

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

[From *As You Like It*]

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither! come hither! come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither! come hither! come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND

[From *As You Like It*]

Blow, blow, thou winter wind!
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky!
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! etc.

SIGH NO MORE, LADIES

[From *Much Ado about Nothing*]

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more!
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea and one on shore;
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny!

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe
Of dumps so dull and heavy!
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny!

O MISTRESS MINE

[From *Twelfth Night*]

O Mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear, your true-love's coming,
That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further, pretty sweeting,
Journeys end in lovers meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet-and-twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not indure.

TAKE, O TAKE THOSE LIPS AWAY

[From *Measure for Measure*]

Take, O take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn:

But my kisses bring again,
Bring again,
Seals of love, but sealed in vain,
Sealed in vain.

CUP US TILL THE WORLD GOES ROUND

[From *Antony and Cleopatra*]

Come thou monarch of the vine,
Plumpy Bacchus with pink eyne!
In thy fats our cares be drown'd,
With thy grapes our hairs be crown'd;
Cup us till the world goes round,
Cup us till the world goes round!

HARK, HARK! THE LARK!

[From *Cymbeline*]

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes;
With every thing that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise!
Arise, arise!

FEAR NO MORE THE HEAT O' THE SUN

[From *Cymbeline*]

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages:

Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great;
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak:
The Sceptre, Learning, Physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finish'd joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

No exorciser harm thee!
Nor no witchcraft charm thee!
Ghost unlaid forbear thee!
Nothing ill come near thee!
Quiet consummation have;
And renownèd be thy grave!

WHERE THE BEE SUCKS

[From *The Tempest*]

WHERE the bee sucks, there suck I:
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

A SEA DIRGE

[From *The Tempest*]

Full fathom five thy father lies:
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Ding-dong!
Hark! now I hear them,—
Ding, dong, bell!

THOMAS CAMPION

Died 1619

FORTUNATI NIMIUM

Jack and Joan, they think no ill,
But loving live, and merry still;
Do their week-day's work, and pray
Devoutly on the holy-day:
Skip and trip it on the green,
And help to choose the Summer Queen;
Lash out at a country feast
Their silver penny with the best.

Well can they judge of nappy ale,
And tell at large a winter tale;
Climb up to the apple loft,
And turn the crabs till they be soft.
Tib is all the father's joy,

And little Tom the mother's boy: —
All their pleasure is, content,
And care, to pay their yearly rent.

Joan can call by name her cows
And deck her windows with green boughs:
She can wreaths and tutties make,
And trim with plums a bridal cake.
Jack knows what brings gain or loss,
And his long flail can stoutly toss:
Makes the hedge which others break,
And ever thinks what he doth speak.

Now, you courtly dames and knights,
That study only strange delights,
Though you scorn the homespun gray,
And revel in your rich array;
Though your tongues dissemble deep
And can your heads from danger keep;
Yet, for all your pomp and train,
Securer lives the silly swain!

BEN JONSON

1573?–1637

SONG — TO CELIA

[From *The Forest*]

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise

Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee
As giving it a hope, that there
It could not withered be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee!

HYMN TO DIANA

Queen and Huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep:
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear when day did close:
Bless us then with wishèd sight,
Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart
And thy crystal-shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever:
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright.

PURITAN AND CAVALIER

JOHN DONNE

1573–1631

A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER

WILT Thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin, through which I run
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done;
For I have more.

Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sins their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallow'd in, a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done;
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son
Shall shine, as He shines now and heretofore:
And having done that, Thou hast done;
I fear no more.

ON THE SACRAMENT

HE was the Word that spake it;
He took the bread and brake it;
And what that Word did make it
I do believe and take it.

ROBERT HERRICK

1591–1674

THE ARGUMENT OF THE HESPERIDES

I SING of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers,
Of April, May, of June and July flowers;
I sing of May-poles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes,
Of bridegrooms, brides and of their bridal cakes;
I write of youth, of love, and have access
By these to sing of cleanly wantonness;
I sing of dews, of rains, and piece by piece
Of balm, of oil, of spice and ambergris;
I sing of times trans-shifting, and I write
How roses first came red and lilies white;
I write of groves, of twilights, and I sing
The court of Mab, and of the fairy king;
I write of hell; I sing (and ever shall)
Of heaven, and hope to have it after all.

TO DAFFODILS

FAIR Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attained his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song!
And, having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;

As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or any thing.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain,
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

GEORGE HERBERT

1593–1633

VIRTUE

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky!
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives,
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

EDMUND WALLER

1606–1687

OLD AGE

[From *Divine Love*]

THE seas are quiet when the winds give o'er!
So calm are we when passions are no more!
For then we know how vain it was to boast
Of fleeting things too certain to be lost.
Clouds of affection from our younger eyes
Conceal that emptiness which age descries.

The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light thro' chinks that time has made:
Stronger by weakness wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home:
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

JOHN MILTON

1608–1674

L'ALLEGRO

HENCE, loathèd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus, and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,
Find out some uncouth cell,
  Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;

There under ebon shades, and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In Heav'n yclep'd Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth
With two sister Graces more
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore:
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic Wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora, playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,
There, on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips, and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
Nods, and Becks, and wreathèd Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as ye go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
And, if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprovèd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,

From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled Dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow
Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of Darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Sometime walking, not unseen
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great Sun begins his state,
Robed in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
While the landskip round it measures,
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The laboring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied;
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.
Towers and battlements it sees

Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighboring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,
Are at their savory dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phyllis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes, with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth, and many a maid
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday.
Till the livelong daylight fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How fairy Mab the junkets eat:
She was pinched, and pulled, she said;
And he by friar's lantern led;
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail had thresh'd the corn,
That ten day-laborers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,

And, crop-full, out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
  Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend,
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With masque and antique pageantry,
Such sights as youthful poets dream,
On summer eves, by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learnèd sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
  And ever against eating cares
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the melting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear

Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly, without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But, hail! thou Goddess, sage and holy!
Hail divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue:
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen, that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea-nymphs, and their powers offended,
Yet thou art higher far descended;
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain.
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades

He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.
  Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cypress lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come; but keep thy wonted state,
With even step and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast,
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with Gods doth diet,
And hear the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
And add to these retirèd Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
But first and chiefest with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In his sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er the accustom'd oak.
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!

Thee, Chauntress, oft the woods among,
I woo to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering Moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the Heavens' wide pathless way;
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or if the air will not permit,
Some still, removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the Bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen on some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds, or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook;
And of those Demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy

In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age,
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
But, O sad Virgin! that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower,
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what Love did seek;
Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar King did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of tourneys and of trophies hung,
Of forests and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not tricked and frounced as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kerchieft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute-drops from off the eaves.
And when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring

To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heavèd stroke
Was never heard, the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There in close covert, by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from Day's garish eye,
While the bee with honeyed thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such concert as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.
And let some strange mysterious dream,
Wave at his wings in airy stream,
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid.
And as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
  But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age

Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that Heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

LYCIDAS

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come, to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And, with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin, then, Sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse:
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favor my destined urn,
And, as he passes, turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,

Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill;
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star, that rose at evening bright,
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute;
Tempered to the oaten flute;
Rough satyrs danced, and fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.

But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn.
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me, I fondly dream
'Had ye been there,' . . . for what could that have done?

What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with uncessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, Shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis, in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. 'But not the praise,'
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears:
'Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumor lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed.'
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honored flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea,
That came in Neptune's plea.
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?

And questioned every gust, of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakèd promontory.
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed:
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next, Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
'Ah! who hath reft,' quoth he, 'my dearest pledge?'
Last came, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore, of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:—
'How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enough of such as, for their bellies' sake,
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learnt aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;

Besides what the grim Wolf, with privy paw,
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.'
Return, Alpheus; the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For, so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou, perhaps, under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold.

Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And O, ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
So sinks the day-star in the ocean-bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and, with new-spangled ore,
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops and sweet societies,
That sing, and, singing, in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still Morn went out with sandals grey;
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay:
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who, having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

ON HIS BLINDNESS

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,
'Doth God exact day labor, light denied?'
I fondly ask. But Patience to prevent
That murmur soon replies, 'God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.'

SIR JOHN SUCKLING

1609–1642

WHY SO PALE AND WAN?

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prithee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dumb and mute, young sinner?
Prithee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prithee, why so mute?

Quit, quit, for shame, this will not move:
This cannot take her.
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her!

I PRITHEE SEND ME BACK MY HEART

I prithee send me back my heart,
Since I cannot have thine:
For if from yours you will not part,
Why, then, shouldst thou have mine?

Yet now I think on't, let it lie,
To find it were in vain,
For th' hast a thief in either eye
Would steal it back again.

Why should two hearts in one breast lie,
And yet not lodge together?
O Love, where is thy sympathy,
If thus our breasts thou sever?

But love is such a mystery,
I cannot find it out:
For when I think I'm best resolv'd,
I then am most in doubt.

Then farewell care, and farewell woe,
I will no longer pine;
For I'll believe I have her heart,
As much as she has mine.

SAMUEL BUTLER

1612–1680

EXTRACTS FROM HUDIBRAS

PART I, CANTO I, ll. 15–104

A WIGHT he was, whose very sight would
Entitle him Mirror of Knight-hood;
That never bent his stubborn knee
To any thing but chivalry,
Nor put up blow, but that which laid
Right worshipful on shoulder-blade:
Chief of domestic knights and errant,
Either for chartel or for warrant:
Great on the bench, great in the saddle,
That could as well bind o'er, as swaddle:
Mighty he was at both of these,
And styl'd of War, as well as Peace.
So some rats of amphibious nature,

Are either for the land or water.
But here our authors make a doubt,
Whether he were more wise, or stout.
Some hold the one, and some the other;
But howsoe'er they make a pother,
The diff'rence was so small, his brain
Outweigh'd his rage but half a grain;
Which made some take him for a tool
That knaves do work with, call'd a fool:
And offer'd to lay wagers, that
As Montaigne, playing with his cat,
Complains she thought him but an ass,
Much more she would Sir Hudibras:
For that's the name our valiant knight
To all his challenges did write.
But they're mistaken very much,
'Tis plain enough he was no such:
We grant, although he had much wit,
H' was very shy of using it;
As being loth to wear it out,
And therefore bore it not about,
Unless on holy-days, or so,
As men their best apparel do.
Besides, 'tis known he could speak Greek
As naturally as pigs squeak:
That Latin was no more difficile,
Than to a blackbird 'tis to whistle:
Being rich in both, he never scanted
His bounty unto such as wanted;
But much of either would afford
To many, that had not one word.
For Hebrew roots, although they're found
To flourish most in barren ground,
He had such plenty, as suffic'd
To make some think him circumcis'd;

And truly so, perhaps, he was,
'Tis many a pious Christian's case.
He was in logic a great critic,
Profoundly skill'd in analytic;
He could distinguish, and divide
A hair 'twixt south, and south-west side;
On either which he would dispute,
Confute, change hands, and still confute;
He'd undertake to prove, by force
Of argument, a man's no horse;
He'd prove a buzzard is no fowl,
And that a lord may be an owl;
A calf an alderman, a goose a justice,
And rooks committee-men or trustees.
He'd run in debt by disputation,
And pay with ratiocination.
All this by syllogism, true
In mood and figure, he would do.
For Rhetoric, he could not ope
His mouth, but out there flew a trope:
And when he happen'd to break off
I' th' middle of his speech, or cough,
H' had hard words ready to show why
And tell what rules he did it by.
Else, when with greatest art he spoke,
You'd think he talk'd like other folk.
For all a rhetorician's rules
Teach nothing but to name his tools.
His ordinary rate of speech
In loftiness of sound was rich;
A Babylonish dialect,
Which learnèd pedants much affect.
It was a parti-color'd dress
Of patched and piebald languages:
'Twas English cut on Greek and Latin,

Like fustian heretofore on satin.
It had an odd promiscuous tone
As if h' had talked three parts in one;
Which made some think, when he did gabble,
Th' had heard three laborers of Babel;
Or Cerberus himself pronounce
A leash of languages at once.

* * * * *

For he was of that stubborn crew
Of errant saints, whom all men grant
To be the true church militant:
Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun;
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery;
And prove their doctrine orthodox
With apostolic blows, and knocks;
Call fire, and sword, and desolation,
A godly — thorough — Reformation,
Which always must be carry'd on,
And still be doing, never done
As if religion were intended
For nothing else but to be mended.
A sect whose chief devotion lies
In odd, perverse antipathies:
In falling out with that or this,
And finding somewhat still amiss:
More peevish, cross, and splenetic
Than dog distract, or monkey sick.
That with more care keep holy-day
The wrong, than others the right way:
Compound for sins they are inclin'd to,
By damning those they have no mind to:
Still so perverse and opposite,
As if they worship'd God for spite.

The self-same thing they will abhor
One way, and long another for.
Free-will they one way disavow,
Another, nothing else allow.
All piety consists therein
In them, in other men all sin.
Rather than fail, they will defy
That which they love most tenderly;
Quarrel with minc'd-pies, and disparage
Their best and dearest friend — plum-porridge;
Fat pig and goose itself oppose,
And blaspheme custard through the nose.

PART I, CANTO III, ll. 1041–1056

He that is valiant and dares fight,
Though drubb'd, can lose no honor by't.
Honor's a lease for lives to come,
And cannot be extended from
The legal tenant: 'Tis a chattel
Not to be forfeited in battle.
If he that in the field is slain,
Be in the bed of honor lain,
He that is beaten may be said
To lie in honor's truckle-bed.
For as we see the eclipsèd sun
By mortals is more gaz'd upon
Than when, adorn'd with all his light,
He shines in serene sky most bright;
So valor, in a low estate,
Is most admir'd and wonder'd at.

PART II, CANTO I, ll. 903–916

The sun grew low and left the skies,
Put down, some write, by ladies' eyes.
The moon pull'd off her veil of light
That hides her face by day from sight.
(Mysterious veil, of brightness made,
That's both her lustre and her shade),
And in the night as freely shone,
As if her rays had been her own:
For darkness is the proper sphere
Where all false glories use t' appear.
The twinkling stars began to muster,
And glitter with their borrow'd lustre,
While sleep the weary'd world reliev'd,
By counterfeiting death reviv'd.

PART II, CANTO II, ll. 29–32

The sun had long since, in the lap
Of Thetis, taken out his nap,
And, like a lobster boil'd, the morn
From black to red began to turn.

PART III, CANTO I, ll. 205–220

Some say the soul's secure
Against distress and forfeiture;
Is free from action, and exempt
From execution and contempt;
And to be summon'd to appear
In the other world's illegal here,
And therefore few make any account
Int' what encumbrances they run't:
For most men carry things so even
Between this world, and hell, and heaven,

Without the least offence to either
They freely deal in all together,
And equally abhor to quit
This world for both, or both for it:
And when they pawn and damn their souls,
They are but pris'ners on paroles.

* * * * *

There are no bargains driv'n;
Nor marriages, clapp'd up in heav'n,
And that's the reason, as some guess,
There is no heav'n in marriages;
Two things that naturally press
Too narrowly, to be at ease:
Their bus'ness there is only love,
Which marriage is not like, t' improve;
Love that's too generous t' abide
To be against its nature ty'd;
For where 'tis of itself inclin'd,
It breaks loose when it is confin'd,
And like the soul, its harborer,
Debarred the freedom of the air,
Disdains against its will to stay,
And struggles out, and flies away:
And therefore never can comply,
T' endure the matrimonial tie,
That binds the female and the male,
Where th' one is but the other's bail;
Like Roman jailers, when they slept,
Chain'd to the prisoners they kept.

RICHARD LOVELACE

1618–1658

TO ALTHEA, FROM PRISON

When love with unconfinèd wings
  Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
  To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair,
  And fetter'd to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
  Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round,
  With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
  Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
  When healths and draughts go free —
Fishes that tipple in the deep
  Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
  With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
  And glories of my King:
When I shall voice aloud how good
  He is, how great should be —
Enlargèd winds that curl the flood
  Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
  Nor iron bars a cage;

Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a hermitage:
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free —
Angels alone that soar above
Enjoy such liberty.

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As thou, too, shalt adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honor more.

HENRY VAUGHAN

1622–1695

THE RETREAT

Happy those early days, when I
Shined in my angel-infancy!
Before I understood this place

Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestial thought;
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first Love,
And looking back, — at that short space, —
Could see a glimpse of His bright face;
When on some gilded cloud, or flower,
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A sev'ral sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.
O how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train;
From whence th' enlightened spirit sees
That shady city of palm-trees.
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

JOHN DRYDEN

1631–1700

MAC FLECKNOE

All human things are subject to decay,
And, when fate summons, monarchs must obey.
This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young
Was called to empire, and had governed long;
In prose and verse was found without dispute,
Through all the realms of Nonsense, absolute.
This agèd prince, now flourished in peace,
And blessed with issue of a large increase,
Worn out with business, did at length debate
To settle the succession of the state;
And, pondering which of all his sons was fit
To reign, and wage immortal war with wit,
Cried, — 'Tis resolved! for nature pleads, that he
Should only rule, who most resembles me.
Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,
Mature in dulness from his tender years;
Shadwell alone, of all my sons, is he,
Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
But Shadwell never deviates into sense;
Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
Strike through, and make a lucid interval;
But Shadwell's genuine night admits no ray,
His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye,
And seems designed for thoughtless majesty;
Thoughtless as monarch oaks, that shade the plain,
And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign.

Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee,
Thou last great prophet of tautology!
Even I, a dunce of more renown than they,
Was sent before but to prepare the way;
And, coarsely clad in Norwich drugget, came
To teach the nation in thy greater name.'

A SONG FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1687

I

From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
When nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
'Arise, ye more than dead.'
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began;
From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in man.

II

What passion cannot music raise and quell?
When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wondering, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound:

Less than a God they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell,
That spoke so sweetly, and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

III

The trumpet's loud clangor
Excites us to arms
With shrill notes of anger
And mortal alarms.
The double, double, double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries, hark! the foes come:
Charge, charge! 'tis too late to retreat.

IV

The soft complaining flute,
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers;
Whose dirge is whisper'd by the warbling lute.

V

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful dame.

VI

But oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,

Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

VII

Orpheus could lead the savage race;
And trees uprooted left their place,
Sequacious of the lyre:
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher;
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appeared,
Mistaking earth for heaven.

Grand Chorus

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the bless'd above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky.

THE PERIOD OF CLASSICISM

MATTHEW PRIOR

1664–1721

AN ODE

The merchant, to secure his treasure,
Conveys it in a borrow'd name:
Euphelia serves to grace my measure;
But Chloe is my real flame.

My softest verse, my darling lyre,
Upon Euphelia's toilet lay;
When Chloe noted her desire,
That I should sing, that I should play.

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise;
But with my numbers mix my sighs:
And whilst I sing Euphelia's praise,
I fix my soul on Chloe's eyes.

Fair Chloe blush'd: Euphelia frown'd:
I sung and gaz'd: I played and trembled:
And Venus to the Loves around
Remark'd how ill we all dissembled.

JOHN GAY

1685–1732

GO, ROSE, MY CHLOE'S BOSOM GRACE

'Go, rose, my Chloe's bosom grace!
How happy should I prove,
Might I supply that envied place
With never-fading love!

There, Phœnix-like, beneath her eye,
Involved in fragrance, burn and die!
Know, hapless flower! that thou shalt find
More fragrant roses there;
I see thy with'ring head reclined
With envy and despair!
One common fate we both must prove;
You die, with envy; I, with love.'

O, RUDDIER THAN THE CHERRY

[From *Acis and Galatea*]

O, RUDDIER than the cherry!
O, sweeter than the berry!
O, Nymph more bright
Than moonshine night!
Like kidlings blithe and merry!

Ripe as the melting cluster!
No lily has such luster!
Yet hard to tame
As raging flame;
And fierce as storms that bluster!

ALEXANDER POPE

1688–1744

AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM

[From *Part II*]

OF all the causes which conspire to blind
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,
Is pride, the never-failing vice of fools.

Whatever nature has in worth denied,
She gives in large recruits of needful pride;
For as in bodies, thus in souls, we find
What wants in blood and spirits, swelled with wind:
Pride, where wit fails, steps into our defence,
And fills up all the mighty void of sense.
If once right reason drives that cloud away,
Truth breaks upon us with resistless day.
Trust not yourself; but your defects to know,
Make use of ev'ry friend and ev'ry foe.

A little learning is a dang'rous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fired at first sight with what the muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts,
While from the bounded level of our mind,
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But more advanced, behold, with strange surprise,
New distant scenes of endless science rise!
So pleased at first the tow'ring Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky,
Th' eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last:
But, those attained, we tremble to survey
The growing labors of the lengthened way,
Th' increasing prospect tires our wand'ring eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

A perfect judge will read each work of wit
With the same spirit that its author writ:
Survey the whole, nor seek slight faults to find
Where nature moves, and rapture warms the mind;
Nor lose for that malignant dull delight,
The gen'rous pleasure to be charmed with wit.
But, in such lays as neither ebb nor flow,

Correctly cold, and regularly low,
That, shunning faults, one quiet tenor keep;
We cannot blame indeed, but we may sleep.
In wit, as nature, what affects our hearts
Is not th' exactness of peculiar parts;
'Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call,
But the joint force and full result of all.
Thus when we view some well-proportioned dome,
(The world's just wonder, and ev'n thine, O Rome!)
No single parts unequally surprise,
All comes united to th' admiring eyes;
No monstrous height, or breadth, or length appear;
The whole at once is bold, and regular.
  Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.
In ev'ry work regard the writer's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend;
And if the means be just, the conduct true,
Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due.
As men of breeding, sometimes men of wit,
T' avoid great errors, must the less commit:
Neglect the rules each verbal critic lays,
For not to know some trifles, is a praise.
Most critics, fond of some subservient art,
Still make the whole depend upon a part:
They talk of principles, but notions prize,
And all to one loved folly sacrifice.
  Once on a time, La Mancha's Knight, they say,
A certain bard encount'ring on the way,
Discoursed in terms as just, with looks as sage,
As e'er could Dennis of the Grecian stage;
Concluding all were desp'rate sots and fools,
Who durst depart from Aristotle's rules.
Our author, happy in a judge so nice,
Produced his play, and begged the knight's advice;

Made him observe the subject, and the plot,
The manners, passions, unities, what not,
All which, exact to rule, were brought about,
Were but a combat in the lists left out.
'What! leave the combat out!' exclaims the knight;
Yes, or we must renounce the Stagyrite.
'Not so, by Heav'n' he answers in a rage,
'Knights, squires, and steeds, must enter on the stage.'
So vast a throng the stage can ne'er contain.
'Then build a new, or act it in a plain.'
Thus critics of less judgment than caprice,
Curious not knowing, not exact but nice,
Form short ideas; and offend in arts,
As most in manners, by a love to parts.
Some to conceit alone their taste confine,
And glitt'ring thoughts struck out at ev'ry line;
Pleased with a work where nothing's just or fit;
One glaring chaos and wild heap of wit.
Poets, like painters, thus, unskilled to trace
The naked nature and the living grace,
With gold and jewels cover ev'ry part,
And hide with ornaments their want of art.
True wit is nature to advantage dressed;
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed;
Something, whose truth convinced at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind.
As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit.
For works may have more wit than does 'em good,
As bodies perish through excess of blood.
Others for language all their care express,
And value books, as women men, for dress:
Their praise is still, — the style is excellent;
The sense, they humbly take upon content.
Words are like leaves; and, where they most abound,

Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found:
False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colors spreads on ev'ry place;
The face of nature we no more survey,
All glares alike, without distinction gay:
But true expression, like th' unchanging sun,
Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon,
It gilds all objects, but it alters none.
Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable:
A vile conceit in pompous words expressed
Is like a clown in regal purple dressed:
For diff'rent styles with diff'rent subjects sort,
As several garbs with country, town, and court.
Some by old words to fame have made pretence,
Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense;
Such labored nothings, in so strange a style,
Amaze th' unlearn'd, and make the learned smile.
Unlucky, as Fungoso in the play,
These sparks with awkward vanity display
What the fine gentleman wore yesterday;
And but so mimic ancient wits at best,
As apes our grandsires, in their doublets drest.
In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold;
Alike fantastic, if too new, or old:
Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

But most by numbers judge a poet's song,
And smooth or rough, with them is right or wrong:
In the bright muse, though thousand charms conspire,
Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire;
Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
Not mend their minds; as some to church repair,
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.
These equal syllables alone require,

Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire;
While expletives their feeble aid do join;
And ten low words oft creep in one dull line:
While they ring round the same unvary'd chimes,
With sure returns of still expected rhymes;
Where'er you find 'the cooling western breeze,'
In the next line, it 'whispers through the trees:'
If crystal streams 'with pleasing murmurs creep,'
The reader's threatened, not in vain, with 'sleep:'
Then, at the last and only couplet fraught
With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,
A needless Alexandrine ends the song,
That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know
What's roundly smooth, or languishingly slow;
And praise the easy vigor of a line,
Where Denham's strength, and Waller's sweetness join.
True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
The sound must seem an echo to the sense.
Soft is the strain when zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar:
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labors, and the words move slow:
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main.
Here how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise!
While, at each change, the son of Libyan Jove
Now burns with glory, and then melts with love;
Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow:

Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found,
And the world's victor stood subdued by sound!
The pow'r of music all our hearts allow,
And what Timotheus was, is Dryden now.
Avoid extremes; and shun the fault of such,
Who still are pleased too little or too much.
At ev'ry trifle scorn to take offence,
That always shows great pride, or little sense:
Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best,
Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.
Yet let not each gay turn thy rapture move;
For fools admire, but men of sense approve:
As things seem large which we through mists descry,
Dulness is ever apt to magnify.
Some foreign writers, some our own despise;
The ancients only, or the moderns prize.
Thus wit, like faith, by each man is applied
To one small sect, and all are damned beside.
Meanly they seek the blessing to confine,
And force that sun but on a part to shine,
Which not alone the southern wit sublimes,
But ripens spirits in cold northern climes;
Which from the first has shone on ages past,
Enlights the present, and shall warm the last;
Though each may feel increases and decays,
And see now clearer and now darker days:
Regard not then if wit be old or new,
But blame the false, and value still the true.

AN ESSAY ON MAN

EPISTLE I

II

Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou find,
Why formed so weak, so little, and so blind?
First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,
Why formed no weaker, blinder, and no less?
Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade!
Or ask of yonder argent fields above
Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove!
Of systems possible, if 'tis confessed
That wisdom infinite must form the best,
Where all must full or not coherent be,
And all that rises, rise in due degree,
Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain,
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man:
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
Is only this, if God has placed him wrong.
Respecting man, whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to all.
In human works, though labored on with pain,
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
In God's, one single can its end produce;
Yet serves to second too some other use.
So man, who here seems principal alone,
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.
When the proud steed shall know why man restrains
His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;
When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Egypt's god;

Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend
His actions', passions', being's, use and end;
Why doing, suff'ring, checked, impelled; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity.
Then say not man's imperfect, heav'n in fault;
Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought:
His knowledge measured to his state and place,
His time a moment, and a point his space.
If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matter, soon or late, or here or there?
The bless'd to-day is as completely so,
As who began a thousand years ago.

III

Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of fate,
All but the page prescribed, their present state;
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know;
Or who could suffer being here below?
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?
Pleased to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.
O blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,
That each may fill the circle mark'd by heav'n:
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
Atoms or systems into ruin hurled,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.
Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher death; and God adore.
What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, but always to be blessed.

The soul, uneasy, and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.
Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
Yet simple nature to his hope has giv'n,
Behind the cloud-topped hill, an humbler heav'n;
Some safer world in depth of woods embraced,
Some happier island in the wat'ry waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
To be, contents his natural desire;
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire;
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.

THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION

JAMES THOMSON

1700–1748

From WINTER

The keener tempests come; and fuming dun
From all the livid east, or piercing north,
Thick clouds ascend; in whose capacious womb
A vapory deluge lies, to snow congealed.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along;
And the sky saddens with the gathered storm.
Through the hushed air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin wavering; till at last the flakes
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherished fields
Put on their winter-robe of purest white.
'Tis brightness all; save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low, the woods
Bow their hoar head; and ere the languid sun,
Faint from the west, emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep-hid and chill,
In one wild dazzling waste, that buries wide
The work of man. Drooping, the laborer-ox
Stands covered o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
Tamed by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
The redbreast, sacred to the household gods,
Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky,
In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves

His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit. Half-afraid, he first
Against the window beats; then, brisk, alights
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is;
Till, more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Though timorous of heart, and hard beset
By death in various forms, dark snares, and dogs,
And more unpitying men, the garden seeks,
Urged on by fearless want. The bleating kind
Eye the black heaven, and next the glistening earth,
With looks of dumb despair; then, sad — dispersed,
Dig for the withered herb through heaps of snow.
Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind;
Baffle the raging year, and fill their pens
With food at will; lodge them below the storm,
And watch them strict: for, from the bellowing east,
In this dire season, oft the whirlwind's wing
Sweeps up the burden of whole wintry plains
In one wide waft, and o'er the hapless flocks,
Hid in the hollow of two neighboring hills,
The billowy tempest whelms; till, upward urged,
The valley to a shining mountain swells,
Tipped with a wreath high-curling in the sky.

RULE, BRITANNIA

When Britain first, at Heaven's command,
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of the land,
And guardian angels sang the strain.
'Rule, Britannia, rule the waves;
Britons never will be slaves.'

The nations, not so blest as thee,
Must in their turns, to tyrants fall;
Whilst thou shalt flourish great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.
'Rule,' etc.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.
'Rule,' etc.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
And work their woe, and thy renown.
'Rule,' etc.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main;
And every shore it circles, thine!
'Rule,' etc.

The Muses, still with freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair:
Blest isle! with matchless beauty crowned,
And manly hearts to guard the fair:
'Rule, Britannia, rule the waves,
Britons never will be slaves.'

CHARLES WESLEY

1707–1788

JESUS, LOVER OF MY SOUL

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is nigh!
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past,
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me!
All my trust on Thee is stay'd,
All my help from Thee I bring:
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing!

Wilt Thou not regard my call?
Wilt Thou not accept my prayer?
Lo! I sink, I faint, I fall!

Lo! on Thee I cast my care!
Reach me out Thy gracious hand!
While I of Thy strength receive,
Hoping against hope I stand,
Dying, and behold I live!

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find:
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind!
Just and holy is Thy Name;
I am all unrighteousness;
False and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound;
Make and keep me pure within!
Thou of Life the Fountain art,
Freely let me take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart!
Rise to all eternity!

THOMAS GRAY

1716–1771

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bow'r,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke:
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,

Await alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If Mem'ry o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where, thro' the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of their soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little Tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade ; nor circumscrib'd alone
  Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd ;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
  And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
  To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
  With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
  Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray ;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
  They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
  Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
  Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered muse,
  The place of fame and elegy supply :
And many a holy text around she strews,
  That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
  This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
  Nor cast one longing, ling'ring look behind ?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
  Some pious drops the closing eye requires ;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
  Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonored dead,
  Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;

If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate, —

Haply some hoary-headed Swain may say,
'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

'One morn I miss'd him on the 'custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he:

'The next, with dirges due in sad array
Slow thro' the church-way path we saw him borne, —
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown. —
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heav'n did a recompense as largely send:

He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear,
He gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No further seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(*There they alike in trembling hope repose,*)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

THE BARD

I. 1

'Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait,
Tho' fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor e'en thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!'
Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance;
'To arms!' cried Mortimer, and couch'd his quiv'ring lance.

I. 2

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood;
(Loose his beard, and hoary hair
Stream'd like a meteor, to the troubled air)
And with a master's hand and prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre:

'Hark, how each giant-oak, and desert cave,
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, oh King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3

'Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hushed the stormy main;
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topp'd head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
Smear'd with gore, and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;
The famish'd eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear, as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear, as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries —
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a griesly band,
I see them sit, they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line: —

II. 1

'Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race:
Give ample room, and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.

Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death, thro' Berkley's roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing King!
She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled Mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
The scourge of Heaven. What Terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

II. 2

'Mighty victor, mighty lord!
Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable warrior fled?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm that in thy noontide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

II. 3

'Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare;
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast.
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.

Heard ye the din of battle bray,
  Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
  Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And thro' the kindred squadrons mow their way.
  Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
  Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
And spare the meek usurper's holy head.
Above, below, the rose of snow,
  Twin'd with her blushing foe, we spread:
The bristled boar in infant gore
  Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, brothers, bending o'er the accursed loom
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

III. 1

'Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof. The thread is spun)
  Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove. The work is done.)—
Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unbless'd, unpitied, here to mourn!
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height
  Descending slow their glitt'ring skirts unroll?
Visions of glory spare my aching sight,
  Ye unborn ages crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.
All-hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail!

III. 2

'Girt with many a baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;

And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old
In bearded majesty appear.
In the midst a form divine!
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton line;
Her lion port, her awe-commanding face,
Attemper'd sweet to virgin grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
What strains of vocal transport round her play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear;
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and soaring, as she sings,
Waves in the eye of Heav'n her many-color'd wings.

III. 3

'The verse adorn again
Fierce War and faithful Love,
And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction drest.
In buskin'd measures move
Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,
With Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A Voice, as of the cherub-choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond impious man, think'st thou, yon sanguine cloud,
Rais'd by thy breath, has quench'd the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me: With joy I see
The different doom our fates assign.
Be thine Despair, and scept'red Care,
To triumph, and to die, are mine.'—
He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plung'd to endless night.

WILLIAM COLLINS

1721–1759

A SONG FROM SHAKESPEARE'S CYMBELINE

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
  Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each op'ning sweet of earliest bloom,
  And rifle all the breathing spring.

No wailing ghost shall dare appear
  To vex with shrieks this quiet grove;
But shepherd lads assemble here,
  And melting virgins own their love.

No withered witch shall here be seen;
  No goblins lead their nightly crew:
The female fays shall haunt the green,
  And dress thy grave with pearly dew!

The redbreast oft, at evening hours,
  Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gather'd flowers,
  To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds, and beating rain,
  In tempests shake the sylvan cell;
Or 'midst the chase on every plain,
  The tender thought on thee shall dwell;

Each lonely scene shall thee restore;
  For thee the tear be duly shed;
Belov'd till life could charm no more,
  And mourn'd till Pity's self be dead.

ODE TO EVENING

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales,

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short, shrill shriek, flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing thro' thy darkening vale,
May, not unseemly, with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return!

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, as his warning lamp
The fragrant hours, and elves
Who slept in flowers the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed pile,
Or upland fallows grey
Reflect its last cool gleam.

But when chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Forbid my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires;
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest eve!
While summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While sallow autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
Or winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes;

So long, sure — found beneath the sylvan shed,
Shall fancy, friendship, science, rose-lipp'd health,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy fav'rite name!

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

1728–1774

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the laboring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid.
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed:
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topt the neighboring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
How often have I blest the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labor free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree,
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old surveyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round.
And still as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out to tire each other down;
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the place;
The bashful virgin's side-long looks of love,

The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught even toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms — but all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain;
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, choked with sedges, works its weedy way.
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert-walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;
And trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away, thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made:
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man;
For him light labor spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more:
His best companions, innocence and health;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land and dispossess the swain;

Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose;
And every want to opulence allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
These gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that asked but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brightened all the green;
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks, and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs — and God has given my share —
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose:
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
And, as an hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return — and die at home at last.

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine,
How happy he who crowns in shades like these,

A youth of labor with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
No surly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Bends to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past!
  Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;
There, as I past with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below;
The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school;
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown foot-way tread,
For all the bloomy flush of life is fled.
All but yon widowed, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring:
She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn;

She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place;
Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings but relieved their pain;
The long remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch and showed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits, or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all.
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,

Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.
Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.
At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.
Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,
There in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school;
A man severe he was and stern to view,
I knew him well, and every truant knew;
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frown'd;

Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault;
The village all declared how much he knew:
'Twas certain he could write and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge;
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For even tho' vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumphed, is forgot.
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where gray-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlor splendors of that festive place:
The white-washed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;
The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs, and flowers and fennel gay;
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.

Vain transitory splendors! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall!
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart

An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the wood-man's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art;
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway:
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And, even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and an happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards even beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.

Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied ;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds ;
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth,
Has robbed the neighboring fields of half their growth ;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green ;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies ;
While thus the land, adorned for pleasure, all
In barren splendor feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorned and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes ;
But when those charms are past, for charms are frail,
When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress.
Thus fares the land, by luxury betrayed,
In nature's simplest charms at first arrayed,
But verging to decline, its splendors rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise ;
While, scourged by famine from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band ;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms — a garden and a grave.

Where then, ah ! where, shall poverty reside,
To scape the pressure of contiguous pride ?
If to some common's fenceless limits strayed
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And even the bare-worn common is denied.

If to the city sped — what waits him there ?

To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
To see those joys the sons of pleasure know
Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
Here while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly decked, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts? Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distrest;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
Now lost to all; her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.
  Do thine, sweet Auburn, — thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
Even now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!
  Ah, no! To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.

Far different there from all that charmed before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods, where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crowned,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only sheltered thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloomed that parting day,
That called them from their native walks away;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their last,
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main;
And shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.
The good old sire, the first prepared to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wished for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,

And blest the cot where every pleasure rose;
And kist her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasp't them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.
O luxury! thou curst by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchang'd are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigor not their own.
At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank, unwieldy woe;
Till sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.
Even now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there;
And piety with wishes placed above,
And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame,
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;

Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
Farewell, and O! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervors glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigors of the inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain:
Teach him, that states of native strength possest,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the labored mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

WHEN LOVELY WOMAN STOOPS TO FOLLY

[From *The Vicar of Wakefield*]

When lovely Woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom, — is to die.

WILLIAM COWPER

1731–1800

ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK

O that those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine — thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
'Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!'
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it) here shines on me still the same.
  Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidst me honor with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long.
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own:
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream that thou art she.
  My mother! when I learnt that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss:
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss —
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers — Yes.
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,

I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such? — It was. — Where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wished I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived.
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learnt at last submission to my lot;
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapped
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capped,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we called the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession! but the record fair
That memory keeps, of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionery plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glow'd;

All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks
That humor interposed too often makes:
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honors to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorn'd in heaven, though little noticed here.
Could time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin,
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and smile),
Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart — the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might. —
But no — what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.
Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed)
Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reached the shore,
'Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,'
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide

Of life long since hast anchored by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed —
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest tost,
Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
Yet, oh, the thought that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not, that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise —
The son of parents passed into the skies!
And now, farewell. Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wished is done
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;
To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine:
And, while the wings of Fancy still are free
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft —
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

WILLIAM BLAKE

1757–1827

TO THE EVENING STAR

Thou fair-hair'd angel of the evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy bright torch of love; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!
Smile on our loves, and while thou drawest the
Blue curtains of the sky, scatter thy silver dew

On every flower that shuts its sweet eyes
In timely sleep. Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon,
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,
And then the lion glares through the dun forest:
The fleeces of our flocks are cover'd with
Thy sacred dew: protect them with thine influence!

MAD SONG

The wild winds weep,
And the night is a-cold;
Come hither, Sleep,
And my griefs enfold! . . .
But lo! the morning peeps
Over the eastern steeps,
And the rustling beds of dawn
The earth do scorn.

Lo! to the vault
Of pavèd heaven,
With sorrow fraught,
My notes are driven:
They strike the ear of Night,
Make weak the eyes of Day;
They make mad the roaring winds,
And with the tempests play,

Like a fiend in a cloud,
With howling woe
After night I do crowd
And with night will go;
I turn my back to the east
From whence comforts have increased;
For light doth seize my brain
With frantic pain.

SONGS OF INNOCENCE

INTRODUCTION

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he, laughing, said to me:

'Pipe a song about a lamb!'
So I piped with merry cheer.
'Piper, pipe that song again;'
So I piped: he wept to hear.

'Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!'
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

'Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read.'
So he vanished from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

La Junta Junior College Library

ROBERT BURNS

1759–1796

TO A MOUSE

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER, 1785

I

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
Oh, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murd'ring pattle!

II

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion
An' fellow-mortal!

III

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,
And never miss't!

IV

Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell an' keen!

V

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

VI

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

VII

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!

VIII

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor. — *Gray.*

I

My lov'd, my honor'd, much respected friend!
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end,
My dearest meed, a friend's esteem and praise:
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been;
Ah! tho' his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween!

II

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose:
The toil-worn Cotter frae his labor goes —
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,

Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

III

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher through,
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise and glee.
His wee bit ingle, blinkin bonnilie,
His clean hearth-stane, his thriftie wifie's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary kiaugh and care beguile,
And makes him quite forget his labor and his toil.

IV

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun';
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town:
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame; perhaps, to shew a braw new gown,
Or deposite her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

V

With joy unfeign'd brothers and sisters meet,
And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers:
The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnotic'd fleet;
Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears.
The parents partial eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view;
The mother, wi' her needle and her sheers,
Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

VI

Their master's an' their mistress's command,
The yonkers a' are warnèd to obey;
And mind their labors wi' an eydent hand,
And ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk or play:
'And, O! be sure to fear the Lord alway,
And mind your duty, duly, morn and night;
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright!'

VII

But hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad came o'er the moor,
To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck anxious care, enquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel-pleased the mother hears, it's nae wild worthless rake.

VIII

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben;
A strappin' youth, he takes the mother's eye;
Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill taen;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But, blate and laithfu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave;
Weel-pleas'd to think her bairn's respected like the lave.

IX

Oh happy love! where love like this is found:
O heart-felt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare:—
'If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the ev'ning gale.'

X

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjur'd arts! dissembling smooth!
Are honor, virtue, conscience, all exil'd?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction wild?

XI

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The healsome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food;
The soupe their only hawkie does afford,
That 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood;
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck, fell,
And aft he's prest, and aft he ca's it guid;
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell,
How 'twas a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

XII

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-Bible, ance his father's pride.
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care,
And 'Let us worship God!' he says, with solemn air.

XIII

They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim:
Perhaps *Dundee's* wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive *Martyrs*, worthy of the name;
Or noble *Elgin* beets the heaven-ward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compar'd with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickl'd ears no heart-felt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

XIV

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or, Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal Bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy Seers that tune the sacred lyre.

XV

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme:
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He, who bore in Heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay His head;
How His first followers and servants sped;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land:
How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounc'd by Heaven's command.

XVI

Then kneeling down, to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope 'springs exulting on triumphant wing,'
That thus they all shall meet in future days,
There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear;
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

XVII

Compar'd with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art;
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's ev'ry grace, except the heart
The Power, incens'd, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul,
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

XVIII

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That He who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly, in their hearts with Grace Divine preside.

XIX

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroad:
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
'An honest man's the noblest work of God';
And certes, in fair Virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind;
What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refin'd!

XX

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent!
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!
And O! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From Luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while!
And stand a wall of fire around their much-lov'd Isle.

XXI

O Thou! who pour'd thy patriotic tide,
That streamed thro' Wallace's undaunted heart.
Who dar'd to, nobly, stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part:
(The patriot's God, peculiarly thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
O never, never Scotia's realm desert;
But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard,
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH, IN APRIL, 1786

I

Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonie gem.

II

Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet!
Wi' spreckl'd breast!
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

III

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;

Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

IV

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield ;
But thou, beneath the random bield
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

V

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise ;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies !

VI

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade !
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust ;
Till she, like thee, all soil'd, is laid
Low i' the dust.

VII

Such is the fate of simple Bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd !
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,

Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

VIII

Such fate to suffering Worth is giv'n,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
By human pride or cunning driv'n
To mis'ry's brink;
Till, wrench'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,
He, ruin'd, sink!

IX

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine — no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom!

O, MY LUVE'S LIKE A RED, RED ROSE

I

O, my Luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June.
O, my Luve's like the melodie,
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

II

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I,
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

III

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun!
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

IV

And fare thee weel, my only luve,
And fare thee weel a while!
And I will come again, my luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile!

AULD LANG SYNE

Chorus

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne!

I

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min'?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne?

II

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I'll be mine,
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne!

III

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans fine,
But we've wander'd monie a weary foot
Sin' auld lang syne.

IV

We twa hae paidl'd in the burn
Frae mornin sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin' auld lang syne.

V

And here's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gie's a hand o' thine,
And we'll take a right guid-willie waught,
For auld lang syne!

Chorus

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne!

JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO

I

John Anderson my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonie brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,

Your locks are like the snaw,
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo!

II

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither;
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo!

WILLIE BREW'D A PECK O' MAUT

Chorus

We are na fou, we're nae that fou,
But just a drappie in our e'e!
The cock may craw, the day may daw,
And ay we'll taste the barley bree.

I

O, Willie brew'd a peck o' maut,
And Rob and Allan cam to see;
Three blyther hearts that lee-lang night,
Ye wad na found in Christendie.

II

Here are we met, three merry boys,
Three merry boys I trow are we;
And monie a night we've merry been,
And monie mae we hope to be!

III

It is the moon, I ken her horn,
That's blinkin in the lift sae hie :
She shines sae bright to wyle us hame,
But by my sooth she'll wait a wee !

IV

Wha first shall rise to gang awa,
A cuckold, coward loun is he !
Wha first beside his chair shall fa',
He is the King amang us three !

Chorus

We are na fou, we're nae that fou,
But just a drappie in our e'e !
The cock may craw, the day may daw,
And ay we'll taste the barley bree.

SCOTS, WHA HAE

I

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed
Or to victorie !

II

Now's the day, and now's the hour ;
See the front o' battle lour,
See approach proud Edward's power —
Chains and slaverie !

III

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

IV

Wha for Scotland's King and Law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or freeman fa',
Let him follow me!

V

By Oppression's woes and pains,
By your sons in servile chains,
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

VI

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do, or die!

CAROLINA, LADY NAIRNE

1766–1845

THE LAND O' THE LEAL

I'm wearin' awa', John,
Like snaw when its thaw, John,
I'm wearin' awa'
To the land o' the leal.

There's nae sorrow there, John,
There's neither cauld nor care, John,
The day's aye fair
  In the land o' the leal.

Our bonny bairn's there, John,
She was baith guid and fair, John,
And oh! we grudged her sair
  To the land o' the leal.
But sorrow's sel' wears past, John,
And joy is comin' fast, John,
The joy that's aye to last
  In the land o' the leal.

Sae dear's that joy was bought, John,
Sae free the battle fought, John,
That sinfu' man e'er brought
  To the land o' the leal.
Oh! dry your glist'ning e'e, John,
My soul langs to be free, John,
And angels beckon me
  To the land o' the leal.

Noo, haud ye leal and true, John,
Your day it's weel near through, John,
And I'll welcome you
  To the land o' the leal.
Noo fare-ye-weel, my ain John,
This warld's cares are vain, John;
We'll meet and we'll be fain
  In the land o' the leal.

THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

1770–1850

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE, DURING A TOUR, JULY 13, 1798

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain springs
With a soft inland murmur. — Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion: and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage ground, these orchard tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.
Those beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me

As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration: — feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened: — that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on, —
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.
If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft —
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart —
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. — I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colors and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. — That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear, — both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.
Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress

With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance —
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence — wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshiper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love — oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

THE DAFFODILS; OR, I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:

I gazed — and gazed — but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

ODE TO DUTY

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free;
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot;
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Oh! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold

Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried:
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control;
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
And fragrance in thy footing treads
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh! let my weakness have an end!

Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And, in the light of truth, thy Bondman let me live!

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

I

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it has been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare,
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,

To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mind the season wrong;
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday;—
Thou child of joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy!

IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel, I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While the earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning,
And the Children are culling
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm.
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm:—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
— But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:

The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul's immensity;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,

Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Black misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:
But for those first affections,

Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We, in thought, will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;

In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober coloring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

LONDON, 1802

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;

And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

The world is too much with us: late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. — Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

1771–1832

THE BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN

[From *The Lord of the Isles*, Canto VI]

X

The King had deem'd the maiden bright
Should reach him long before the fight,
But storms and fate her course delay:
It was on eve of battle-day,
When o'er the Gillie's-hill she rode.
The landscape like a furnace glow'd,
And far as e'er the eye was borne,
The lances waved like autumn corn.
In battles four beneath their eye,
The forces of King Robert lie.
And one below the hill was laid,
Reserved for rescue and for aid;
And three, advanced, form'd vaward line,
'Twixt Bannock's brook and Ninian's shrine.
Detach'd was each, yet each so nigh
As well might mutual aid supply.
Beyond, the Southern host appears,
A boundless wilderness of spears,
Whose verge or rear the anxious eye
Strove far, but strove in vain, to spy.
Thick flashing in the evening beam,
Glaives, lances, bills, and banners gleam;
And where the heaven join'd with the hill,
Was distant armor flashing still,
So wide, so far, the boundless host
Seem'd in the blue horizon lost.

XI

Down from the hill the maiden pass'd,
At the wild show of war aghast;
And traversed first the rearward host,
Reserved for aid where needed most.
The men of Carrick and of Ayr,
Lennox and Lanark, too, were there,
And all the western land;
With these the valiant of the Isles
Beneath their chieftains rank'd their files
In many a plaided band.
There, in the center, proudly raised,
The Bruce's royal standard blazed,
And there Lord Ronald's banner bore
A galley driven by sail and oar.
A wild, yet pleasing contrast, made
Warriors in mail and plate array'd,
With the plumed bonnet and the plaid
By these Hebrideans worn;
But O! unseen for three long years,
Dear was the garb of mountaineers
To the fair Maid of Lorn!
For one she look'd — but he was far
Busied amid the ranks of war —
Yet with affection's troubled eye
She mark'd his banner boldly fly,
Gave on the countless foe a glance,
And thought on battle's desperate chance.

XIV

O gay, yet fearful to behold,
Flashing with steel and rough with gold,
And bristled o'er with bills and spears,
With plumes and pennons waving fair,

Was that bright battle-front! for there
  Rode England's King and peers:
And who, that saw that monarch ride,
His kingdom battled by his side,
Could then his direful doom foretell!—
Fair was his seat in knightly selle,
And in his sprightly eye was set
Some spark of the Plantagenet.
Though light and wandering was his glance,
It flash'd at sight of shield and lance.
'Know'st thou,' he said, 'De Argentine,
Yon knight who marshals thus their line?'—
'The tokens on his helmet tell
The Bruce, my Liege: I know him well.'—
'And shall the audacious traitor brave
The presence where our banners wave?'—
'So please my Liege,' said Argentine,
'Were he but horsed on steed like mine,
To give him fair and knightly chance,
I would adventure forth my lance.'—
'In battle-day,' the King replied,
'Nice tourney rules are set aside.
—Still must the rebel dare our wrath?
Set on him — sweep him from our path!'—
And, at King Edward's signal, soon
Dash'd from the ranks Sir Henry Boune.

XV

Of Hereford's high blood he came,
A race renown'd for knightly fame.
He burn'd before his Monarch's eye
To do some deed of chivalry.
He spurr'd his steed, he couch'd his lance,
And darted on the Bruce at once.

— As motionless as rocks, that bide
The wrath of the advancing tide,
The Bruce stood fast. — Each breast beat high,
And dazzled was each gazing eye —
The heart had hardly time to think,
The eyelid scarce had time to wink,
While on the King, like flash of flame,
Spurr'd to full speed the war-horse came!
The partridge may the falcon mock,
If that slight palfrey stand the shock —
But, swerving from the knight's career,
Just as they met, Bruce shunn'd the spear,
Onward the baffled warrior bore
His course — but soon his course was o'er! —
High in his stirrups stood the King,
And gave his battle-axe the swing.
Right on De Boune, the whiles he pass'd,
Fell that stern dint — the first — the last! —
Such strength upon the blow was put,
The helmet crash'd like hazel-nut;
The axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp,
Was shiver'd to the gauntlet grasp.
Springs from the blow the startled horse,
Drops to the plain the lifeless corse;
— First of that fatal field, how soon,
How sudden, fell the fierce De Boune!

XXI

Now onward, and in open view,
The countless ranks of England drew,
Dark rolling like the ocean-tide,
When the rough west hath chafed his pride,
And his deep roar sends challenge wide
To all that bars his way!

In front the gallant archers trode,
The men-at-arms behind them rode,
And midmost of the phalanx broad
  The Monarch held his sway.
Beside him many a war-horse fumes,
Around him waves a sea of plumes,
Where many a knight in battle known,
And some whose spurs had first braced on,
And deem'd that fight should see them won,
  King Edward's hests obey.
De Argentine attends his side,
With stout De Valence, Pembroke's pride,
Selected champions from the train,
To wait upon his bridle-rein.
Upon the Scottish foe he gazed —
— At once, before his sight amazed,
  Sunk banner, spear, and shield;
Each weapon-point is downward sent,
Each warrior to the ground is bent.
'The rebels, Argentine, repent!
  For pardon they have kneel'd.' —
'Aye! — but they bend to other powers,
And other pardon sue than ours!
See where yon barefoot Abbot stands,
And blesses them with lifted hands!
Upon the spot where they have kneel'd,
These men will die or win the field.'
— 'Then prove we if they die or win!
Bid Gloster's Earl the fight begin.'

XXIII

Then spurs were dash'd in chargers' flanks,
They rush'd among the archer ranks,
No spears were there the shock to let,

No stakes to turn the charge was set,
And how shall yeoman's armor slight,
Stand the long lance and mace of might?
Or what may their short swords avail,
'Gainst barbed horse and shirt of mail?
Amid their ranks the chargers sprung,
High o'er their heads the weapons swung,
And shriek and groan and vengeful shout
Give note of triumph and of rout!
Awhile, with stubborn hardihood,
Their English hearts the strife made good.
Borne down at length on every side,
Compell'd to flight, they scatter wide.—
Let stags of Sherwood leap for glee,
And bound the deer of Dallom-Lee!
The broken bows of Bannock's shore
Shall in the greenwood ring no more!
Round Wakefield's merry May-pole now,
The maids may twine the summer bough,
May northward look with longing glance,
For those that wont to lead the dance,
For the blithe archers look in vain!
Broken, dispersed, in flight o'erta'en,
Pierced through, trode down, by thousands slain,
They cumber Bannock's bloody plain.

XXVI

Unflinching foot 'gainst foot was set,
Unceasing blow by blow was met;
  The groans of those who fell
Were drown'd amid the shriller clang
That from the blades and harness rang,
  And in the battle-yell.
Yet fast they fell, unheard, forgot,

Both Southern fierce and hardy Scot;
And O! amid that waste of life,
What various motives fired the strife!
The aspiring Noble bled for fame,
The Patriot for his country's claim;
This Knight his youthful strength to prove,
And that to win his lady's love;
Some fought from ruffian thirst of blood,
From habit some, or hardihood.
But ruffian stern, and soldier good,
The noble and the slave,
From various cause the same wild road,
On the same bloody morning, trode,
To that dark inn, the Grave!

XXVIII

Bruce, with the pilot's wary eye,
The slackening of the storm could spy.
'One effort more, and Scotland's free!
Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
Is firm as Ailsa Rock,
Rush on with Highland sword and targe,
I with my Carrick spearmen charge;
Now, forward to the shock!'
At once the spears were forward thrown,
Against the sun the broadswords shone;
The pibroch lent its maddening tone,
And loud King Robert's voice was known —
'Carrick, press on — they fail, they fail!
Press on, brave sons of Innisgail,
The foe is fainting fast!
Each strike for parent, child, and wife,
For Scotland, liberty, and life, —
The battle cannot last!'

XXXI

Already scatter'd o'er the plain,
Reproof, command, and counsel vain,
The rearward squadrons fled amain,
  Or made but doubtful stay; —
But when they mark'd the seeming show
Of fresh and fierce and marshall'd foe,
  The boldest broke array.
O give their hapless prince his due!
In vain the royal Edward threw
  His person 'mid the spears,
Cried, 'Fight!' to terror and despair,
Menaced, and wept, and tore his hair,
  And cursed their caitiff fears;
Till Pembroke turn'd his bridle rein,
And forced him from the fatal plain.
With them rode Argentine, until
They gain'd the summit of the hill,
  But quitted there the train: —
'In yonder field a gage I left, —
I must not live of fame bereft;
  I needs must turn again.
Speed hence, my Liege, for on your trace
The fiery Douglas takes the chase,
  I know his banner well.
God send my Sovereign joy and bliss,
And many a happier field than this! —
  Once more, my Liege, farewell.'

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN

I

'Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
  Why weep ye by the tide?

I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride.
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen' —
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

II

'Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Erington
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen' —
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

III

'A chain of gold ye sall not lack;
Nor braid to bind your hair,
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you the foremost o' them a'
Shall ride our forest-queen' —
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

IV

The kirk was deck'd at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmer'd fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
The ladie was not seen!

She's o'er the Border, and awa'
Wi' Jock o' Hazeldean.

LOCHINVAR

LADY HERON'S SONG

[From *Marmion*, Canto V]

O, YOUNG Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And save his good broadsword, he weapon had none,
He rode all unarm'd, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he enter'd the Netherby Hall,
Among brides-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word),
'O come you in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?'

'I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied;—
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide—
And now I am come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar.'

The bride kiss'd the goblet: the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar, —
'Now tread we a measure!' said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bridemaidens whispered, ''Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar.'

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reach'd the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
'She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow,' quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing, on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have you e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

BORDER SONG

[From *The Monastery*]

I

MARCH, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,
Why the deil dinna ye march forward in order?

March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,
All the Blue Bonnets are bound for the Border.
Many a banner spread,
Flutters above your head,
Many a crest that is famous in story.
Mount and make ready then,
Sons of the mountain glen,
Fight for the Queen and the old Scottish glory!

II

Come from the hills where your hirsels are grazing,
Come from the glen of the buck and the roe;
Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing,
Come with the buckler, the lance, and the bow.
Trumpets are sounding,
War-steeds are bounding,
Stand to your arms then, and march in good order,
England shall many a day
Tell of the bloody fray,
When the Blue Bonnets came over the Border!

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

1772–1834

FRANCE: AN ODE

I

Ye Clouds! that far above me float and pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may control!
Ye Ocean-Waves! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws!
Ye Woods! that listen to the night-birds' singing,

Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches swinging,
Have made a solemn music of the wind!
Where like a man beloved of God,
Through glooms, which never woodman trod,
How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I wound,
Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable sound!
O ye loud Waves! and O ye Forests high!
And O ye Clouds that far above me soared!
Thou rising Sun! thou blue rejoicing Sky!
Yea, every thing that is and will be free!
Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
With what deep worship I have still adored
The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II

When France in wrath her giant-limbs upreared,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth, and sea,
Stamped her strong foot and said she would be free,
Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared!
With what a joy my lofty gratulation
Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band:
And when to whelm the disenchanted nation,
Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,
The monarchs marched in evil day,
And Britain joined the dire array;
Though dear her shores and circling ocean,
Though many friendships, many youthful loves
Had swol'n the patriot emotion
And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and groves;
Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat
To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,

And shame too long delayed and vain retreat!
For ne'er, O Liberty! with partial aim
I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy flame;
But blessed the pæans of delivered France,
And hung my head and wept at Britain's name.

III

'And what,' I said, 'though Blasphemy's loud scream
With that sweet music of deliverance strove!
Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove
A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's dream!
Ye storms, that round the dawning east assembled,
The sun was rising, though ye hid his light!'
And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and trembled,
The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calm and bright;
When France her front deep-scarr'd and gory
Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory;
When, insupportably advancing,
Her arm made mockery of the warrior's tramp;
While timid looks of fury glancing,
Domestic treason, crushed beneath her fatal stamp,
Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore;
Then I reproached my fears that would not flee;
'And soon,' I said, 'shall Wisdom teach her lore
In the low huts of them that toil and groan!
And, conquering by her happiness alone,
Shall France compel the nations to be free,
Till Love and Joy look round, and call the Earth their own.'

IV

Forgive me, Freedom! O forgive those dreams!
I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,
From bleak Helvetia's icy caverns sent—
I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained streams!

Heroes, that for your peaceful country perished,
And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain-snows
With bleeding wounds; forgive me, that I cherished
One thought that ever blessed your cruel foes!
To scatter rage and traitorous guilt
Where Peace her jealous home had built;
A patriot-race to disinherit
Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear;
And with inexpiable spirit
To taint the bloodless freedom of the mountaineer —
O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
And patriot only in pernicious toils!
Are these thy boasts, Champion of human kind?
To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey;
To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
From freemen torn; to tempt and to betray?

V

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion! In mad game
They burst their manacles and wear the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain!
O Liberty! with profitless endeavor
Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour;
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor ever
Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power.
Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee,
(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays thee)
Alike from Priestcraft's harpy minions,
And factious Blasphemy's obscener slaves,
Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of the waves!
And there I feel thee! — on that sea-cliff's verge,

Whose pines, scarce traveled by the breeze above,
Had made one murmur with the distant surge!
Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
And shot my being through earth, sea and air,
Possessing all things with intensest love,
O Liberty! my spirit felt thee there.

HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI

Hast thou a charm to stay the morning-star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air, and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
I worshiped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my Thought.
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing — there,
As in her natural form, swell'd vast to Heaven!

Awake, my soul! Not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the Vale!
O struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky or when they sink:
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
Thyself earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth?
Who fill'd thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
For ever shatter'd and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence came),
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye Ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain —
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers

Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet? —
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
Ye signs and wonders of the element!
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
Into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast —
Thou too again, stupendous Mountain! thou
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow traveling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapory cloud,
To rise before me — Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense from the Earth!
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great Hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

KUBLA KHAN; OR, A VISION IN A DREAM

A FRAGMENT

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced;
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

CHARLES LAMB

1775–1834

SONNET XI

We were two pretty babes, the youngest she,
The youngest, and the loveliest far, I ween,

And INNOCENCE her name. The time has been
We two did love each other's company;
Time was we two had wept to have been apart
But when by show of seeming good beguil'd,
I left the garb and manners of a child,
And my first love for man's society,
Defiling with the world my virgin heart —
My loved companion dropped a tear, and fled,
And hid in deepest shades her awful head.
Belovèd, who shall tell me where thou art —
In what delicious Eden to be found —
That I may seek thee the wide world around?

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

1775–1864

ROSE AYLMER

AH what avails the sceptered race,
Ah what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.

THOMAS CAMPBELL

1777–1844

HOHENLINDEN

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat, at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast array'd,
Each horseman drew his battle blade,
And furious every charger neigh'd
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills, with thunder riven,
Then rushed the steed, to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of heaven
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stainèd snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun,
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory or the grave!

Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few, shall part where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulcher.

THOMAS MOORE

1779–1852

OFT IN THE STILLY NIGHT

Oft, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me;
The smiles, the tears,
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimm'd and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken!
Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends, so link'd together,
I've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather;
I feel like one,
Who treads alone

Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed!
Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

LEIGH HUNT

1784–1859

ABOU BEN ADHEM

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold: —
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
'What writest thou?' The vision raised its head,
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, 'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!

GEORGE NOEL GORDON, LORD BYRON

1788–1824

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR

I

The king was on his throne,
The satraps thronged the hall:
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deemed divine —
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless Heathen's wine!

II

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man; —
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

III

The monarch saw and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless waxed his look,
And tremulous his voice.

'Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth.'

IV

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw — but knew no more.

V

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night, —
The morrow proved it true.

VI

'Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom passed away,
He, in the balance weighed,
Is light and worthless clay;
The shroud his robe of state,
His canopy the stone;
The Mede is at his gate!
The Persian on his throne!'

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

I

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

II

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

III

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved — and forever grew still!

IV

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

V

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent — the banners alone —
The lances unlifted — the trumpet unblown.

VI

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

THE ISLES OF GREECE

[From *Don Juan*, Canto III]

I

The Isles of Greece, the Isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of War and Peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their Sun, is set.

II

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The Hero's harp, the Lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse;
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your Sires' 'Islands of the Blest.'

III

The mountains look on Marathon —
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;
For standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

IV

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations; — all were his!
He counted them at break of day —
And when the sun set, where were they?

V

And where are they? and where art thou,
My Country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now —
The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

VI

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame
Though linked among a fettered race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush — for Greece a tear.

VII

Must *we* but weep o'er the days more blest?
Must *we* but blush? — Our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ!

VIII

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no; — the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer, 'Let one living head,
But one arise, — we come, we come!'
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

IX

In vain — in vain: strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
Hark! rising to the ignoble call —
How answers each bold bacchanal!

X

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet,
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus gave —
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

XI

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these!
It made Anacreon's song divine:
He served — but served Polycrates —
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

XII

The Tyrant of the Chersonese
Was Freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!
Oh! That the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind!
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

XIII

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

XIV

Trust not for freedom to the Franks —
They have a king who buys and sells;
In native swords, and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells;
But Turkish force and Latin fraud,
Would break your shield, however broad.

XV

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
Our virgins dance beneath the shade —
I see their glorious black eyes shine;
But gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

XVI

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine —
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

SONNET ON CHILLON

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art:
For there thy habitation is the heart —
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned —
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar — for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonivard! — May none these marks efface!
For thy appeal from tyranny to God.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

A FABLE

I

My hair is grey, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,
As men's have grown from sudden fears:
My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are banned, and barred — forbidden fare;
But this was for my father's faith
I suffered chains and courted death;

That father perished at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;
We were seven — who now are one,
  Six in youth, and one in age,
Finished as they had begun,
  Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have sealed,
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied; —
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and grey,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years — I cannot count them o'er,

I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother drooped and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III

They chained us each to a column stone,
And we were three — yet, each alone;
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together — yet apart,
Fettered in hand, but pined in heart,
'Twas still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,
A grating sound, not full and free,
As they of yore were wont to be:
It might be fancy — but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do — and did my best —
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given

To him, with eyes as blue as heaven —
  For him my soul was sorely moved:
And truly might it be distrest
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day —
(When day was beautiful to me
  As to young eagles, being free) —
  A polar day which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
  Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
  And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flowed like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

V

The other was as pure of mind,
But formed to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perished in the foremost rank
  With joy: — but not in chains to pine:
His spirit withered with their clank,
  I saw it silently decline —
  And so perchance in sooth did mine:
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
  Had followed there the deer and wolf;
  To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fettered feet the worst of ills.

VI

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
Which round about the wave enthralls:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made — and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay:
We heard it ripple night and day;
Sounding o'er our heads it knocked;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky;
And then the very rock hath rocked,
And I have felt it shake, unshocked,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

VII

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loath'd and put away his food;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunters' fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captives' tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den;

But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side.
But why delay the truth? — he died:
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand — nor dead —
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died — and they unlocked his chain,
And scoop'd for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begged them, as a boon to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine — it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his free-born breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer —
They coldly laugh'd — and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such Murder's fitting monument!

VIII

But he, the favorite and the flower,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought

To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired —
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away.
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood: —
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread:
But these were horrors — this was woe
Unmix'd with such — but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender — kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray;
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright;
And not a word of murmur — not
A groan o'er his untimely lot, —
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence — lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting Nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less:

I listened, but I could not hear;
I called, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonishèd;
I called, and thought I heard a sound —
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rushed to him: — I found him not,
I only stirred in this black spot,
I only lived, *I* only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
The last, the sole, the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath —
My brothers — both had ceased to breathe:
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir or strive,
But felt that I was still alive —
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.
I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope — but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

IX

What next befell me then and there
I know not well — I never knew —
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too:
I had no thought, no feeling — none —
Among the stones, I stood a stone,

And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and grey;
It was not night — it was not day;
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness — without a place;
There were no stars — no earth — no time —
No check — no change — no good — no crime —
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

X

A light broke in upon my brain, —
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful, till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track;
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perched, as fond and tame,
And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,

And song that said a thousand things,
  And seem'd to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
It seem'd like me to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
  Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity,
  Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in wingèd guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For — Heaven forgive that thought! the while
Which made me both to weep and smile —
I sometimes deemed that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 'twas mortal — well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown —
And left me twice so doubly lone, —
Lone — as the corse within its shroud,
Lone — as a solitary cloud,
  A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
  When skies are blue and earth is gay.

XI

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was: — my broken chain
With links unfastened did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crush'd heart felt blind and sick.

XII

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all,
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:
No child — no sire — no kin had I,
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barred windows, and to bend

Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII

I saw them — and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high — their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channelled rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-walled distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,
  The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seemed no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were flowers growing,
  Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seemed joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled — and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;

It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save, —
And yet my glance, too much opprest,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV

It might be months, or years, or days —
I kept no count — I took no note —
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free;
I asked not why, and recked not where;
It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be,
I learned to love despair.
And thus when they appeared at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage — and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill — yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell;
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are: — even I
Regained my freedom with a sigh.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

1792–1822

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

I

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odors plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: oh hear!

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh, hear!

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! if even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skyey speed
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

v

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is;
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unwakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

TO A SKYLARK

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of Heaven,
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see — we feel, that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingèd thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was,
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass:

Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:

I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance,
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest — but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet, if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;

If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then — as I am listening now.

ADONAIS

I

I WEEP for Adonais — he is dead!
Oh, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow! Say: 'With me
Died Adonais; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity!'

II

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when he lay
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness? where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died? With veilèd eyes,
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise

She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies,
With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of death.

III

Oh, weep for Adonais — he is dead!
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone, where all things wise and fair
Descend: — oh, dream not that the amorous Deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

IV

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania! — He died,
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth, the third among the sons of light.

V

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Not all to that bright station dared to climb;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,

Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road,
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene abode.

VI

But now, thy youngest, dearest one, has perished,
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,
And fed with true love tears instead of dew;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals, nipt before they blew,
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily dies — the storm is overpast.

VII

To that high Capital, where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came; and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal. — Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;
Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

VIII

He will awake no more, oh, never more! —
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace,
The shadow of white Death, and at the door
Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface

So fair a prey, till darkness and the law
Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.

IX

Oh, weep for Adonais! — The quick Dreams,
The passion-wingèd Ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not, —
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, nor find a home again.

X

And one with trembling hand clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries;
'Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some Dream hath loosened from his brain.'
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

XI

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs, as if embalming them;
Another clipped her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

XII

Another Splendor on his mouth alit,
That mouth whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music: the damp death
Quenched its caress upon its icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapor, which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its eclipse.

XIII

And others came — Desires and Adorations,
Wingèd Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
Splendors, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies;
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp; — the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

XIV

All he had loved, and moulded into thought
From shape, and hue, and odor, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watch tower, and her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aërial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

XV

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds: — a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

XVI

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear,
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou Adonais: wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odor, to sighing ruth.

XVII

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

XVIII

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons' bier;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere;
And the green lizard, and the golden snake,
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

XIX

Through wood and stream and field and hill and Ocean
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst,
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on Chaos; in its stream immersed,
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst;
Diffuse themselves, and spend in love's delight
The beauty and the joy of their renewèd might.

XX

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit tender,
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendor
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath;
Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning? — the intense atom glows
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

XXI

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we? of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.
As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow.

XXII

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
'Wake thou,' cried Misery, 'childless Mother, rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's core,
A wound more fierce than his with tears and sighs.'
And all the Dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the Echoes whom their sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried: 'Arise!'
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendor sprung.

XXIII

She rose like an autumnal Night, that springs
Out of the East, and follows wild and drear
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Has left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

XXIV

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,
And human hearts, which to her aery tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:
And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they
Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

XXV

In the death-chamber for a moment Death,
Shamed by the presence of that living Might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.
'Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!' cried Urania: her distress
Roused Death; Death rose and smiled, and met her vain caress.

XXVI

'Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art!
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart!

XXVII

'O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh, where was then
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

XXVIII

'The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
The vultures, to the conqueror's banner true,
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion; — how they fled,
When like Apollo from his golden bow,
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
And smiled! — The spoilers tempt no second blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

XXIX

'The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again;
So it is in the world of living men:
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night.'

XXX

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

XXXI

'Midst others of less note, came one frail form,
A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

XXXII

A pard-like spirit beautiful and swift —
A love in desolation masked; — a Power
Girt round with weakness; — it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow; — even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may break.

XXXIII

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

XXXIV

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own,
As in the accents of an unknown land,
He sang new sorrow; sad Urania scanned
The stranger's mien, and murmured: 'Who art thou?
He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's — oh, that it should be so!

XXXV

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be he, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honored the departed one,
Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs,
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

XXXVI

Our Adonais has drunk poison — oh !
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe ?
The nameless worm would now itself disown :
It felt, yet could escape the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

XXXVII

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame !
Live ! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name !
But be thyself, and know thyself to be !
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow :
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee ;
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt — as now.

XXXVIII

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion-kites that scream below ;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead ;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now. —
Dust to the dust ! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

XXXIX

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep —
He hath awakened from the dream of life —
'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings. — *We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

XL

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

XLI

He lives, he wakes — 'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais. — Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

XLII

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

XLIII

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

XLIV

The splendors of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

XLV

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale, — his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him ; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose ; and Lucan, by his death approved :
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

XLVI

And many more, whose names on earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
' Thou art become as one of us,' they cry,
' It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid a Heaven of song.
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of our throng ! '

XLVII

Who mourns for Adonais ? Oh, come forth,
Fond wretch ! and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous earth ;
As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Satiate the void circumference : then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night ;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

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XLVIII

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
Oh, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions, there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend, — they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

XLIX

Go thou to Rome, — at once the paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds and fragrant copses dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread;

L

And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath,
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

LI

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

LII

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments. — Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!
Follow where all is fled! — Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

LIII

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart?
Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!
A light is past from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles, — the low wind whispers near:
'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

LIV

That light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That beauty in which all things work and move,
That benediction which the eclipsing curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst; now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

LV

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven,
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully afar;
Whilst burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

A LAMENT

O WORLD! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more — oh, never more!

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight;
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more — oh, never more!

JOHN KEATS

1795–1821

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

I

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
  My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
  One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
  But being too happy in thy happiness,—
    That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
      In some melodious plot
  Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
    Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

II

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
  Cool'd a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
  Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
  Full of the true, the blissful Hippocrene,
    With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
      And purple-stainèd mouth;
  That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
    And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

III

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
  What thou among the leaves hast never known,

The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

IV

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

V

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorne, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

VI

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain —
To thy high requiem become a sod.

VII

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

VIII

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:

Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music: — Do I wake or sleep?

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

I

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

II

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal — yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

III

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And happy melodist, unwearied,

Forever piping songs forever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
Forever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
Forever panting, and forever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

IV

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or seashore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets forever more
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

V

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,' — that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew;
And sure in language strange she said,
'I love thee true.'

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gazed, and sighed deep,
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes —
So kiss'd to sleep.

And there we slumber'd on the moss,
And there I dream'd, ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cry'd — 'La Belle Dame sans Merci,
Hath thee in thrall!'

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

Much have I travel'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He star'd at the Pacific — and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise —
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

I

St. Agnes' Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

II

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze,
Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

III

Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue

Flatter'd to tears this agèd man and poor;
But no — already had his death-bell rung;
The joys of all his life were said and sung:
His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

IV

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;
And so it chanc'd, for many a door was wide,
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
The carvèd angels, ever eager-eyed,
Star'd, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their breasts.

V

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting fairily
The brain, new-stuff'd, in youth, with triumphs gay
Of old romance. These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,
On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly care,
As she had heard old dames full many a time declare.

VI

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive

Upon the honey'd middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

VII

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
The music, yearning like a god in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
Pass by — she heeded not at all: in vain
Came many a tip-toe, amorous cavalier,
And back retir'd; not cool'd by high disdain,
But she saw not: her heart was otherwhere:
She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

VIII

She danced along with vague, regardless eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:
The hallow'd hour was near at hand: she sighs
Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd resort
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
Hoodwink'd with faery fancy; all amort,
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

IX

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She linger'd still. Meantime, across the moors,
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,

Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all unseen;
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss — in sooth such things have been.

X

He ventures in: let no buzz'd whisper tell:
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel:
For him those chambers held barbarian hordes,
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage: not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

XI

Ah, happy chance! the agèd creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond
The sound of merriment and chorus bland:
He startled her; but soon she knew his face,
And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied hand,
Saying, 'Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from this place;
They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty race!

XII

'Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hildebrand;
He had a fever late, and in the fit
He cursèd thee and thine, both house and land:
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit
More tame for his grey hairs — Alas me! flit!

Flit like a ghost away.' 'Ah, Gossip dear,
We're safe enough; here in this arm-chair sit,
And tell me how' — 'Good Saints! not here, not here;
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy bier.'

XIII

He follow'd through a lowly archèd way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume;
And as she mutter'd 'Well-a — well-a-day!'
He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.
'Now tell me where is Madeline,' said he,
'O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving piously.'

XIV

'St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve —
Yet men will murder upon holy days:
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,
To venture so: it fills me with amaze
To see thee, Porphyro! — St. Agnes' Eve!
God's help! my lady fair the conjuror plays
This very night: good angels her deceive!
But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time to grieve.'

XV

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an agèd crone
Who keepeth clos'd a wondrous riddle-book,
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told

His lady's purpose; and he scarce could brook
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

XVI

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,
Flushing his brow, and in his painèd heart
Made purple riot: then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start:
'A cruel man and impious thou art:
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep and dream
Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee. Go, go! — I deem
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst seem.'

XVII

'I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,'
Quoth Porphyro: 'O may I ne'er find grace
When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face:
Good Angela, believe me by these tears;
Or I will, even in a moment's space,
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,
And beard them, though they be more fang'd than wolves and bears.'

XVIII

'Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, church-yard thing,
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll;
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,
Were never miss'd.' Thus plaining, doth she bring
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;
So woeful, and of such deep sorrowing,

That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

XIX

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy
That he might see her beauty unespied,
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,
While legion'd fairies pac'd the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.
Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

XX

'It shall be as thou wishest,' said the Dame:
'All cates and dainties shall be storèd there
Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour frame
Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel in prayer
The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead.'

XXI

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd;
The dame return'd, and whisper'd in his ear
To follow her; with agèd eyes aghast
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd and chaste;
Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd amain.
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

XXII

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmèd maid,
Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:
With silver taper's light, and pious care,
She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd and fled.

XXIII

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
She closed the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No utter'd syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

XXIV

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep damask'd wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.

XXV

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven: — Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

XXVI

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathèd pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her warmèd jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

XXVII

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppres'd
Her soothèd limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain:
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

XXVIII

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gaz'd upon her empty dress,
And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
And breath'd himself: then from the closet crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, lo! — how fast she slept.

XXIX

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half-anguish'd, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet: —
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,
Affray his ears, though but in dying tone: —
The hall-door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

XXX

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanchèd linen, smooth and lavender'd,
While he from forth the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
From Fez; and spicèd dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.

XXXI

These delicates he heap'd with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathèd silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retirèd quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light. —
'And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache.'

XXXII

Thus whispering, his warm, unnervèd arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains: — 'twas a midnight charm
Impossible to melt as icèd stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:
It seem'd he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofèd phantasies.

XXXIII

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute, —
Tumultuous, — and, in chords that tenderest be,
He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Province call'd, 'La belle dame sans merci;'
Close to her ear touching the melody; —
Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft moan:
He ceased — she panted quick — and suddenly
Her blue affrayèd eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone.

XXXIV

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change, that nigh expell'd
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep;
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh;
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;
Who knelt, with joinèd hands and piteous eye,
Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so dreamingly.

XXXV

'Ah, Porphyro!' she said, 'but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:
How chang'd thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
O leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go.'

XXXVI

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star
Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;
Into her dream he melted, as the rose
Blendeth its odor with the violet, —
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

XXXVII

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:
'This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!'
'Tis dark: the icèd gusts still rave and beat:
'No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine. —
Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
Though thou forsakest a deceivèd thing; —
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unprunèd wing.'

XXXVIII

'My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil dyed?
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
After so many hours of toil and quest,
A famish'd pilgrim, — saved by miracle.
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest
Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.'

XXXIX

'Hark! 'tis an elfin storm from faery land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
Arise — arise! the morning is at hand; —
The bloated wassailers will never heed: —
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see, —
Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee.'

XL

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears —
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found, —
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,
Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

XLI

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide;
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side:
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones; —
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans;

XLII

And they are gone: aye, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm.
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,
Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform;
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes cold.

THOMAS HOOD

1799–1845

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER

I REMEMBER, I remember,
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor brought too long a day;
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember
The roses, red and white,
The violets, and the lily-cups,
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birth-day,—
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing;
My spirit flew in feathers then,
That is so heavy now,
And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow!

I remember, I remember
The fir-trees dark and high;

I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heav'n
Than when I was a boy.

THE VICTORIAN PERIOD

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

1800–1859

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

BY OBADIAH BIND-THEIR-KINGS-IN-CHAINS-AND-THEIR-NOBLES-WITH-LINKS-OF-IRON, SERGEANT IN IRETON'S REGIMENT

Oh! Wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red?
And wherefore do your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence are the grapes of the wine-press that ye tread?

Oh evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sate in the high places, and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance, and their cuirasses shine;
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essenced hair;
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The General rode along us to form us for the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled into a shout,
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billow on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line!
For God! for the Cause! for the Church, for the Laws!
For Charles, King of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his trumpets and his drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes, close your ranks;
For Rupert never comes, but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! they rush on! We are broken! we are gone!
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.
O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last.

Stout Skippen hath a wound; the centre hath given ground:
Hark! hark! — What means this trampling of horsemen in the rear?
What banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he, thank God, 'tis he, boys,
Bear up another minute; Brave Oliver is here.

Their heads are stooping low, their pikes all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dykes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the Accurst,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple Bar:
And he — he turns, he flies: shame to those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war.

Ho! comrades, scour the plain, and, ere ye strip the slain,
First give another stab to make the quest secure,
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-pieces and lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doubtlets shone with gold, and your hearts were gay and bold,
When you kiss'd your lily hands to your lemans to-day;

And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues, that late mocked at heaven, and hell, and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your blades,
Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your oaths?
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and your spades?

Down, down, for ever down with the mitre and the crown,
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of the Pope;
There is woe in Oxford halls; there is wail in Durham stalls:
The Jesuit smites his bosom: the Bishop rends his cope.

And she of the seven hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;
And the Kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

1801–1890

LEAD KINDLY LIGHT

Lead kindly light, amid th' encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home;
Lead Thou me on;
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Shouldst lead me on;

I loved to choose and see my path; but now
Lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will. Remember not past years!

So long Thy Power hath blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

1806–1861

SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE

XXII

When our two souls stand up erect and strong,
Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,
Until the lengthening wings break into fire
At either curvèd point, — What bitter wrong
Can the earth do to us, that we should not long
Be here contented? Think. In mounting higher,
The angels would press on us, and aspire
To drop some golden orb of perfect song
Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
Rather on earth, Belovèd, — where the unfit,
Contrarious moods of men recoil away
And isolate pure spirits, and permit
A place to stand and love in for a day,
With darkness and the death-hour rounding it.

XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and Ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise;
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith;
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, — I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

What was he doing, the great God Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great God Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sat the great God Pan,
While turbidly flowed the river;

And hacked and hewed as a great God can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of the leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great God Pan,
(How tall it stood in the river!)
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sat by the river.

'This is the way,' laugh'd the great God Pan,
(Laughed while he sat by the river,)
'The only way, since Gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed.'
Then dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great God Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great God Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true Gods sigh for the cost and pain, —
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

ROBERT BROWNING

1812–1889

SONG

[From *Pippa Passes*]

THE year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world!

PROSPICE

FEAR death? — to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so — one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.

No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon:
A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming day;
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused 'My plans
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall,'—
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy
  And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy:
  You hardly could suspect —
(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
  Scarce any blood came through)
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
  Was all but shot in two.

'Well,' cried he, 'Emperor, by God's grace
  We've got you Ratisbon!
The Marshal's in the market-place,
  And you'll be there anon
To see your flag-bird flap his vans
  Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him!' The chief's eye flashed; his plans
  Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed; but presently
  Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother-eagle's eye
  When her bruised eaglet breathes;
'You're wounded!' 'Nay,' the soldier's pride
  Touched to the quick, he said:
'I'm killed, Sire!' And his chief beside,
  Smiling the boy fell dead.

MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.

Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
'Frà Pandolf' by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, 'Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much,' or 'Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat:' such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart — how shall I say? — too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace — all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men, — good! but thanked
Somehow — I know not how — as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech — (which I have not) — to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, 'Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark' — and if she let

Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
– E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

'CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME'

My first thought was, he lied in every word,
That hoary cripple, with malicious eye
Askance to watch the working of his lie
On mine, and mouth scarce able to afford
Suppression of the glee, that pursed and scored
Its edge, at one more victim gained thereby.

What else should he be set for, with his staff?
What, save to waylay with his lies, ensnare
All travelers who might find him posted there,
And ask the road? I guessed what skull-like laugh
Would break, what crutch 'gin write my epitaph
For pastime in the dusty thoroughfare.

If at his counsel I should turn aside
Into that ominous tract which, all agree,
Hides the Dark Tower. Yet acquiescingly
I did turn as he pointed: neither pride
Nor hope rekindling at the end descried,
So much as gladness that some end might be.

For, what with my whole world-wide wandering,
What with my search drawn out through years, my hope
Dwindled into a ghost not fit to cope
With that obstreperous joy success would bring, —
I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring
My heart made, finding failure in its scope.

As when a sick man very near to death
Seems dead indeed, and feels begin and end
The tears, and takes the farewell of each friend,
And hears one bid the other go, draw breath,
Freelier outside, ('since all is o'er,' he saith,
'And the blow fallen no grieving can amend;')

While some discuss if near the other graves
Be room enough for this, and when a day
Suits best for carrying the corpse away,
With care about the banners, scarves, and staves:
And still the man hears all, and only craves
He may not shame such tender love and stay.

Thus, I had so long suffered in this quest,
Heard failure prophesied so oft, been writ
So many times among 'The Band' — to wit,
The knights who to the Dark Tower's search addressed
Their steps — that just to fail as they, seemed best,
And all the doubt was now — should I be fit?

So, quiet as despair, I turned from him,
That hateful cripple, out of his highway

Into the path he pointed. All the day
Had been a dreary one at best, and dim
Was settling to its close, yet shot one grim
Red leer to see the plain catch its estray.

For mark! no sooner was I fairly found
Pledged to the plain, after a pace or two,
Than, pausing to throw backward a last view
O'er the safe road, 'twas gone; gray plain all round:
Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound.
I might go on; nought else remained to do.

So, on I went. I think I never saw
Such starved ignoble nature; nothing throve:
For flowers — as well expect a cedar grove!
But cockle, spurge, according to their law
Might propagate their kind, with none to awe,
You'd think: a burr had been a treasure trove.

No! penury, inertness, and grimace,
In some strange sort, were the land's portion. 'See
Or shut your eyes,' said Nature peevishly,
'It nothing skills; I cannot help my case:
'Tis the Last Judgment's fire must cure this place,
Calcine its clods and set my prisoners free.'

If there pushed any ragged thistle-stalk
Above its mates, the head was chopped; the bents
Were jealous else. What made those holes and rents
In the dock's harsh swarth leaves, bruised as to balk
All hope of greenness? 'tis a brute must walk
Pashing their life out, with a brute's intents.

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair
In leprosy; thin dry blades pricked the mud
Which underneath looked kneaded up with blood.

One stiff blind horse, his every bone a-stare,
Stood stupefied, however he came there:
Thrust out past service from the devil's stud!

Alive? he might be dead for aught I know,
With that red gaunt and colloped neck a-strain,
And shut eyes underneath the rusty mane;
Seldom went such grotesqueness with such woe;
I never saw a brute I hated so;
He must be wicked to deserve such pain.

I shut my eyes and turned them on my heart.
As a man calls for wine before he fights,
I ask one draught of earlier, happier sights,
Ere fitly I could hope to play my part.
Think first, fight afterward — the soldier's art:
One taste of the old time sets all to rights.

Not it! I fancied Cuthbert's reddening face
Beneath its garniture of curly gold,
Dear fellow, till I almost felt him fold
An arm in mine to fix me to the place,
That way he used. Alas, one night's disgrace!
Out went my heart's new fire and left it cold.

Giles then, the soul of honor — there he stands
Frank as ten years ago when knighted first.
What honest man should dare (he said) he durst.
Good — but the scene shifts — faugh! what hangman hands
Pin to his breast a parchment? His own bands
Read it. Poor traitor, spit upon and curst!

Better this present than a past like that;
Back therefore to my darkening path again!
No sound, no sight as far as eye could strain.
Will the night send a howlet or a bat?

I ask: when something on the dismal flat
Came to arrest my thoughts and change their train.

A sudden little river crossed my path
As unexpected as a serpent comes.
No sluggish tide congenial to the glooms;
This, as it frothed by, might have been a bath
For the fiend's glowing hoof — to see the wrath
Of its black eddy bespate with flakes and spumes.

So petty yet so spiteful! All along,
Low scrubby alders kneeled down over it;
Drenched willows flung them headlong in a fit
Of mute despair, a suicidal throng:
The river which had done them all the wrong,
Whate'er that was, rolled by, deterred no whit.

Which, while I forded, — good saints, how I feared
To set my foot upon a dead man's cheek,
Each step, or feel the spear I thrust to seek
For hollows, tangled in his hair or beard!
— It may have been a water-rat I speared,
But, ugh! it sounded like a baby's shriek.

Glad was I when I reached the other bank.
Now for a better country. Vain presage!
Who were the strugglers, what war did they wage
Whose savage trample thus could pad the dank
Soil to a plash? Toads in a poisoned tank,
Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage —

The fight must so have seemed in that fell cirque.
What penned them there, with all the plain to choose?
No footprint leading to that horrid mews,
None out of it. Mad brewage set to work
Their brains, no doubt, like galley-slaves the Turk
Pits for his pastime, Christians against Jews.

And more than that — a furlong on — why, there!
What bad use was that engine for, that wheel,
Or brake, not wheel — that harrow fit to reel
Men's bodies out like silk? with all the air
Of Tophet's tool, on earth left unaware,
Or brought to sharpen its rusty teeth of steel.

Then came a bit of stubbed ground, once a wood,
Next a marsh, it would seem, and now mere earth
Desperate and done with: (so a fool finds mirth,
Makes a thing and then mars it, till his mood
Changes and off he goes!) within a rood —
Bog, clay, and rubble, sand and stark black dearth.

Now blotches rankling, colored gay and grim,
Now patches where some leanness of the soil's
Broke into moss or substances like boils;
Then came some palsied oak, a cleft in him
Like a distorted mouth that splits its rim
Gaping at death, and dies while it recoils.

And just as far as ever from the end!
Naught in the distance but the evening, naught
To point my footstep further! At the thought,
A great black bird, Apollyon's bosom-friend,
Sailed past, nor beat his wide wing dragon-penned
That brushed my cap — perchance the guide I sought.

For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,
Spite of the dusk, the plain had given place
All round to mountains — with such name to grace
Mere ugly heights and heaps now stolen in view.
How thus they had surprised me,— solve it, you!
How to get from them was no clearer case.

Yet half I seemed to recognize some trick
Of mischief happened to me, God knows when —

In a bad dream, perhaps. Here ended, then,
Progress this way. When in the very nick
Of giving up, one time more, came a click
As when a trap shuts — you're inside the den!

Burningly it came on me all at once,
This was the place! those two hills on the right,
Crouched like two bulls locked horn in horn in fight;
While to the left, a tall scalped mountain . . . Dunce?
Dotard, a-dozing at the very nonce,
After a life spent training for the sight!

What in the midst lay but the Tower itself?
The round squat turret, blind as the fool's heart,
Built of brown stone, without a counterpart
In the whole world. The tempest's mocking elf
Points to the shipman thus the unseen shelf
He strikes on, only when the timbers start.

Not see? because of night perhaps? — why, day
Came back again for that! before it left,
The dying sunset kindled through a cleft:
The hills, like giants at a hunting lay,
Chin upon hand, to see the game at bay, —
'Now stab and end the creature — to the heft!'

Not hear? when noise was everywhere! it tolled
Increasing like a bell. Names in my ears
Of all the lost adventurers my peers, —
How such a one was strong, and such was bold,
And such was fortunate, yet each of old
Lost, lost! one moment knelled the woe of years.

There they stood, ranged along the hillsides, met
To view the last of me, a living frame
For one more picture! in a sheet of flame
I saw them and I knew them all. And yet

Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
And blew. '*Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came.*'

ANDREA DEL SARTO

CALLED 'THE FAULTLESS PAINTER'

BUT do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?
I'll work then for your friend's friend, never fear,
Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
Oh, I'll content him,—but to-morrow, Love!
I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual, and it seems
As if—forgive now—should you let me sit
Here by the window with your hand in mine
And look a half hour forth on Fiesole,
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
To-morrow, how shall you be glad of this!
Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
And mine the man's bared breast she curls inside.
Don't count the time lost, neither; you must serve
For each of the five pictures we require:
It saves a model. So! keep looking so—
My serpentining beauty, rounds on rounds!
—How could you ever prick those perfect ears,
Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet—

My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,
Which everybody looks on and calls his,
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks — no one's: very dear, no less.
You smile? why, there's my picture ready made,
There's what we painters call our harmony!
A common grayness silvers every thing, —
All in a twilight, you and I alike
— You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone, you know), — but I, at every point;
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top;
That length of convent-wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;
The last monk leaves the garden; days decrease,
And autumn grows, autumn in every thing.
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-peace. Love, we are in God's hand.
How strange now looks the life he makes us lead;
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!
This chamber for example — turn your head —
All that's behind us! You don't understand
Nor care to understand about my art,
But you can hear at least when people speak:
And that cartoon, the second from the door
— It is the thing, Love! so such things should be —
Behold Madonna! — I am bold to say.
I can do with my pencil what I know,
What I see, what at bottom of my heart
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep —
Do easily, too — when I say, perfectly,

I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are judge
Who listened to the Legate's talk last week,
And just as much they used to say in France.
At any rate 'tis easy, all of it!
No sketches first, no studies, that's long past:
I do what many dream of all their lives,
— Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do,
And fail in doing. I could count twenty such
On twice your fingers, and not leave this town,
Who strive — you don't know how the others strive
To paint a little thing like that you smeared
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat, —
Yet do much less, so much less, Someone says,
(I know his name, no matter) — so much less!
Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.
There burns a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain,
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt
This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.
Their works drop groundward, but themselves, I know,
Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me,
Enter and take their place there sure enough,
Though they come back and cannot tell the world.
My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.
The sudden blood of these men! at a word —
Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils too.
I, painting from myself and to myself,
Know what I do, am unmoved by men's blame
Or their praise either. Somebody remarks
Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,
His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,
Rightly traced and well ordered; what of that?
Speak as they please, what does the mountain care?
Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-gray

Placid and perfect with my art: the worse!
I know both what I want and what might gain,
And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
'Had I been two, another and myself,
Our head might have o'erlooked the world!' No doubt.
Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
The Urbinate who died five years ago.
('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)
Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
Reaching, that heaven might so replenish him,
Above and through his art — for it gives way;
That arm is wrongly put — and there again —
A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,
He means right — that, a child may understand.
Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:
But all the play, the insight and the stretch —
Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think —
More than I merit, yes, by many times.
But had you — oh, with the same perfect brow,
And perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth,
And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare —
Had you, with these the same, but brought a mind!
Some women do so. Had the mouth there urged
'God and the glory! never care for gain.
The present by the future, what is that?
Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!
Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!'
I might have done it for you. So it seems:
Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.

Beside, incentives come from the soul's self;
The rest avail not. Why do I need you?
What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?
In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
Yet the will's somewhat — somewhat, too, the power —
And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,
God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.
'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
That I am something underrated here,
Poor this long while, despised, to speak the truth.
I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.
The best is when they pass and look aside;
But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.
Well may they speak! That Francis, that first time,
And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!
I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,
Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
In that humane great monarch's golden look, —
One finger in his beard or twisted curl
Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,
One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
I painted proudly with his breath on me,
All his court round me, seeing with his eyes,
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls
Profuse, my hand kept plying by those hearts, —
And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,
This in the background, waiting on my work,
To crown the issue with a last reward!
A good time, was it not, my kingly days?
And had you not grown restless . . . but I know —
'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct said;
Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,

And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt
Out of the grange whose four walls make his world.
How could it end in any other way?
You called me, and I came home to your heart.
The triumph was — to reach and stay there; since,
I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?
Let my hands frame your face in your hair's gold,
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!
'Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;
The Roman's is the better when you pray,
But still the other's Virgin was his wife' —
Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge
Both pictures in your presence; clearer grows
My better fortune, I resolve to think.
For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,
Said one day Agnolo, his very self,
To Rafael . . . I have known it all these years . . .
(When the young man was flaming out his thoughts
Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,
Too lifted up in heart because of it)
'Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub
Goes up and down our Florence, none cares how,
Who, were he set to plan and execute
As you are, pricked on by your popes and kings,
Would bring the sweat into that brow of yours!'
To Rafael's! — And indeed the arm is wrong.
I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,
Give the chalk here — quick, thus the line should go!
Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!
Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
(What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?
Do you forget already words like those?)
If really there was such a chance, so lost, —
Is, whether you're — not grateful — but more pleased.
Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed!

This hour has been an hour! Another smile?
If you would sit thus by me every night
I should work better, do you comprehend?
I mean that I should earn more, give you more.
See, it is settled dusk now; there's a star;
Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the wall,
The cue-owls speak the name we call them by.
Come from the window, love, — come in, at last,
Inside the melancholy little house
We built to be so gay with. God is just.
King Francis may forgive me: oft at nights
When I look up from painting, eyes tired out,
The walls become illumined, brick by brick
Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,
That gold of his I did cement them with!
Let us but love each other. Must you go?
That Cousin here again? he waits outside?
Must see you — you, and not with me? Those loans?
More gaming debts to pay? you smiled for that?
Well, let smiles buy me! have you more to spend?
While hand and eye and something of a heart
Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it worth?
I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit
The gray remainder of the evening out,
Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly
How I could paint, were I but back in France,
One picture, just one more — the Virgin's face,
Not yours this time! I want you at my side
To hear them — that is, Michel Agnolo —
Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.
Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your friend.
I take the subjects for his corridor,
Finish the portrait out of hand — there, there,
And throw him another thing or two
If he demurs; the whole shall prove enough

To pay for this same Cousin's freak. Beside,
What's better and what's all I care about,
Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!
Love, does that please you? Ah, but what does he
The Cousin! what does he to please you more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.
I regret little, I would change still less.
Since that my past life lies, why alter it?
The very wrong to Francis!—it is true
I took his coin, was tempted and complied,
And built this house and sinned, and all is said.
My father and my mother died of want.
Well, had I riches of my own? you see
How one gets rich! Let each one bear his lot.
They were born poor, lived poor, and poor they died:
And I have labored somewhat in my time
And not been paid profusely. Some good son
Paint my two hundred pictures — let him try!
No doubt, there's something strikes a balance. Yes,
You love me quite enough, it seems to-night.
This must suffice me here. What would one have?
In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance —
Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,
Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo and me
To cover — the three first without a wife,
While I have mine! So — still they overcome
Because there's still Lucrezia, — as I choose.
Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my Love.

HERVÉ RIEL

I

On the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred ninety-two,
Did the English fight the French, — woe to France!
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through the blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of sharks pursue,
Came crowding ship on ship to Saint Malo on the Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

II

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with the victor in full chase;
First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship, Damfreville;
Close on him fled, great and small,
Twenty-two good ships in all;
And they signaled to the place
'Help the winners of a race!
Get us guidance, give us harbor, take us quick — or, quicker still,
Here's the English can and will!'

III

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leapt on board;
'Why, what hope or chance have ships like these to pass?' laughed they:
'Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage scarred and scored,
Shall the "Formidable" here with her twelve and eighty guns
Think to make the river-mouth by the single narrow way,
Trust to enter where 'tis ticklish for a craft of twenty tons,
And with flow at full beside?
Now 'tis slackest ebb of tide.
Reach the moorings? Rather say,

While rock stands or water runs,
Not a ship will leave the bay!'

IV

Then was called a council straight.
Brief and bitter the debate:
'Here's the English at our heels; would you have them take in tow
All that's left us of the fleet, linked together stern and bow,
For a prize to Plymouth Sound?
Better run the ships aground!'
(Ended Damfreville his speech).
'Not a minute more to wait!
Let the Captains all and each
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on the beach!
France must undergo her fate.

V

'Give the word!' But no such word
Was ever spoke or heard;
For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid all these
A Captain? A Lieutenant? A Mate — first, second, third?
No such man of mark, and meet
With his betters to compete!
But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville for the fleet,
A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croisickese.

VI

And 'What mockery or malice have we here?' cries Hervé Riel:
'Are you mad, you Maluins? Are you cowards, fools, or rogues?
Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the soundings, tell
On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell
'Twixt the offing here and Grève where the river disembogues?
Are you bought by English gold? Is it love the lying's for?

Morn and eve, night and day,
Have I piloted your bay,
Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Solidor.
Burn the fleet and ruin France? That were worse than fifty Hogues!
Sirs, they know I speak the truth! Sirs, believe me there's a way!
Only let me lead the line,
Have the biggest ship to steer,
Get this "Formidable" clear,
Make the others follow mine,
And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I know well,
Right to Solidor past Grève,
And there lay them safe and sound;
And if one ship misbehave,
— Keel so much as grate the ground,
Why, I've nothing but my life, — here's my head!' cries Hervé Riel.

VII

Not a minute more to wait.
'Steer us in, then, small and great!
Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron!' cried its chief.
Captains, give the sailor place!
He is Admiral, in brief.
Still the north-wind, by God's grace!
See the noble fellow's face
As the big ship, with a bound,
Clears the entry like a hound,
Keeps the passage as its inch of way were the wide sea's profound!
See, safe through shoal and rock,
How they follow in a flock,
Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the ground,
Not a spar that comes to grief!

The peril, see, is past,
All are harbored to the last,
And just as Hervé Riel hollas 'Anchor!'—sure as fate,
Up the English come—too late!

VIII

So, the storm subsides to calm:
They see the green trees wave
On the heights o'erlooking Grève.
Hearts that bled are stanched with balm.
'Just our rapture to enhance,
Let the English rake the bay,
Gnash their teeth and glare askance
As they cannonade away!
Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the Rance!'
How hope succeeds despair on each Captain's countenance!
Out burst all with one accord,
'This is Paradise for Hell!
Let France, let France's King
Thank the man that did the thing!'
What a shout, and all one word,
'Hervé Riel!'
As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise
In the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

IX

Then said Damfreville, 'My friend,
I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard.
Praise is deeper than the lips:
You have saved the King his ships,
You must name your own reward.
'Faith, our sun was near eclipse!

Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still.
Ask to heart's content and have! or my name's not Damfreville.'

X

Then a beam of fun outbroke
On the bearded mouth that spoke,
As the honest heart laughed through
Those frank eyes of Breton blue:
'Since I needs must say my say,
Since on board the duty's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point, what is it but a run?
Since 'tis ask and have, I may —
Since the others go ashore —
Come! a good whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call the Belle Aurore!'
That he asked and that he got, — nothing more.

XI

Name and deed alike are lost:
Not a pillar nor a post
In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell;
Not a head in white and black
On a single fishing-smack,
In memory of the man but for whom had gone to wrack
All that France saved from the fight whence England bore the bell.
Go to Paris: rank on rank
Search the heroes flung pell-mell
On the Louvre, face and flank!
You shall look long enough ere you come to Hervé Riel.
So, for better and for worse,
Hervé Riel, accept my verse!
In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once more
Save the squadron, honor France, love thy wife the Belle Aurore!

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

1819–1861

WHERE LIES THE LAND?

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth face,
Link'd arm in arm, how pleasant here to pace;
Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below
The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights when wild northwesters rave,
How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave!
The dripping sailor on the reeling mast
Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

Say not the struggle nought availeth,
The labor and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main,

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

1822–1888

SHAKESPEARE

Others abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask — Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foil'd searching of mortality;
And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honor'd, self-secure,
Didst tread on earth unguess'd at. — Better so!
All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

DOVER BEACH

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair

Upon the straits; — on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanched land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.
The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd!
But I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain

Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

SELF-DEPENDENCE

Weary of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:
'Ye who from my childhood up have calm'd me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

'Ah, once more,' I cried, 'ye stars, ye waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew;
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!'

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer:
'Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they.

'Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

'And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silver'd roll:
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

'Bounded by themselves and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,

In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see.'

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:
'Resolve to be thyself; and know that he,
Who finds himself loses his misery!'

GABRIEL CHARLES DANTE ROSSETTI

1828–1882

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For a service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,

Surely she leaned o'er me — her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove

Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

'I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come,' she said.
'Have I not prayed in Heaven? — on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

'When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

'We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;

And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

'We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

'And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know.'

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

'We two,' she said, 'will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

'Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

'He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

'Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

'There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love,—only to be,
As then awhile, forever now
Together, I and he.'

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,—
'All this is when he comes.' She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, fill'd
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

MY SISTER'S SLEEP

She fell asleep on Christmas Eve.
At length the long-ungranted shade
Of weary eyelids overweigh'd
The pain nought else might yet relieve.

Our mother, who had leaned all day
Over the bed from chime to chime,
Then raised herself for the first time,
And as she sat her down, did pray.

Her little work-table was spread
With work to finish. For the glare
Made by her candle, she had care
To work some distance from the bed.

Without, there was a cold moon up,
Of winter radiance sheer and thin;
The hollow halo it was in
Was like an icy crystal cup.

Through the small room, with subtle sound
Of flame, by vents the fireshine drove
And reddened. In its dim alcove
The mirror shed a clearness round.

I had been sitting up some nights,
And my tired mind felt weak and blank;
Like a sharp strengthening wine it drank
The stillness and the broken lights.

Twelve struck. That sound, by dwindling years
Heard in each hour, crept off; and then
The ruffled silence spread again,
Like water that a pebble stirs.

Our mother rose from where she sat:
Her needles, as she laid them down,

Met lightly, and her silken gown
Settled: no other noise than that.

'Glory unto the Newly Born!'
So, as said angels, she did say;
Because we were in Christmas Day,
Though it would still be long till morn.

Just then in the room over us
There was a pushing back of chairs,
As some who had sat unawares
So late, now heard the hour, and rose.

With anxious softly-stepping haste
Our mother went where Margaret lay,
Fearing the sounds o'erhead — should they
Have broken her long-watched-for rest!

She stooped an instant, calm, and turned;
But suddenly turned back again;
And all her features seemed in pain
With woe, and her eyes gazed and yearned.

For my part, I but hid my face,
And held my breath, and spoke no word:
There was none spoken; but I heard
The silence for a little space.

Our mother bowed herself and wept:
And both my arms fell, and I said,
'God knows I knew that she was dead.'
And there, all white, my sister slept.

Then kneeling upon Christmas morn
A little after twelve o'clock
We said, ere the first quarter struck,
'Christ's blessing on the newly born!'

SONNET XIX — SILENT NOON

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass, —
  The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
  Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
  Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge
  Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-hedge.
'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.

Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky: —
  So this wing'd hour is dropt to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companioned inarticulate hour
  When twofold silence was the song of love.

SONNET LXXXVI — LOST DAYS

The lost days of my life until to-day,
  What were they, could I see them on the street
  Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of wheat
Sown once for food but trodden into clay?
Or golden coins squandered and still to pay?
  Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?
  Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
The undying throats of Hell, athirst alway?

I do not see them here; but after death
  God knows I know the faces I shall see,
Each one a murdered self, with low last breath.
  'I am thyself, — what hast thou done to me?'
'And I — and I — thyself,' (lo! each one saith,)
  'And thou thyself to all eternity!'

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

1837–1909

CHORUS

[From *Atalanta in Calydon*]

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
The mother of months in meadow or plain
Fills the shadows and windy places
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;
And the brown bright nightingale amorous
Is half assuaged for Itylus,
For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers,
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
With a noise of winds and many rivers,
With a clamor of waters, and with might;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,
Round the feet of the day and the feet of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,
Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her
Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!
For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
Ripe grasses trammel a traveling foot,
The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes
From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
And the oat is heard above the lyre,
And the hoofèd heel of a satyr crushes
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with dancing and fills with delight
The Mænad and the Bassarid;
And soft as lips that laugh and hide
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
And screen from seeing and leave in sight
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare
Her bright breast shortening into sighs;
The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,
But the berried ivy catches and cleaves
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare
The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

If childhood were not in the world,
  But only men and women grown;
No baby-locks in tendrils curled,
  No baby blossoms blown;

Though men were stronger, women fairer,
  And nearer all delights in reach,
And verse and music uttered rarer
  Tones of more godlike speech;

Though the utmost life of life's best hours
  Found, as it cannot find, words;
Though desert sands were sweet as flowers
  And flowers could sing like birds,

But children never heard them, never
  They felt a child's foot leap and run;
This were a drearier star than ever
  Yet looked upon the sun.

ALFRED TENNYSON

1809–1892

MARIANA

'Mariana in the moated grange.'
— *Measure for Measure.*

With blackest moss the flower-pots
  Were thickly crusted, one and all;
The rusted nails fell from the knots
  That held the pear to the gable wall.

The broken sheds look'd sad and strange;
Unlifted was the clinking latch:
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, 'My life is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said;
She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!'

Her tears fell with the dews at even;
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.
After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
She only said, 'The night is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said;
She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!'

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow;
The cock sung out an hour ere light;
From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her: without hope of change,
In sleep she seemed to walk forlorn,
Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn
About the lonely moated grange.
She only said, 'The day is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said;
She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!'

About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gnarlèd bark:
For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.
She only said, 'My life is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said;
She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!'

And ever when the moon was low,
And the shrill winds were up and away,
In the white curtain, to and fro,
She saw the gusty shadows sway.
But when the moon was very low,
And wild winds bound within their cell,
The shadow of the poplar fell
Upon her bed, across her brow.
She only said, 'The night is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said;
She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!'

All day within the dreamy house,
The doors upon their hinges creak'd;
The blue fly sung in the pane; the mouse
Behind the mouldering wainscot shriek'd,
Or from the crevice peered about.
Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
Old voices called her from without.
She only said, 'My life is dreary,

He cometh not,' she said;
She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!'

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
The slow clock ticking, and the sound
Which to the wooing wind aloof
The poplar made, did all confound
Her sense; but most she loathed the hour
When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
Athwart the chambers, and the day
Was sloping toward his western bower.
Then said she, 'I am very dreary,
He will not come,' she said;
She wept, 'I am aweary, aweary,
O God, that I were dead!'

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O, well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags O Sea!

But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

BUGLE SONG

[From *The Princess*]

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O, hark, O, hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O, sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O, love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

'Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

'Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

'Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

'Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.'

IN MEMORIAM

XV

To-night the winds begin to rise
And roar from yonder dropping day;
The last red leaf is whirl'd away,
The rooks are blown about the skies;

The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,
The cattle huddled on the lea;
And wildly dash'd on tower and tree
The sunbeam strikes along the world:

And but for fancies, which aver
That all thy motions gently pass
Athwart a plane of molten glass,
I scarce could brook the strain and stir

That makes the barren branches loud;
And but for fear it is not so,
The wild unrest that lives in woe
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud

That rises upward always higher,
And onward drags a laboring breast,
And topples round the dreary west,
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

XXX

With trembling fingers did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth;
A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,
And sadly fell on Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
We gamboll'd, making vain pretence
Of gladness, with an awful sense
Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused: the winds were in the beech:
We heard them sweep the winter land;
And in a circle hand-in-hand
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang;
We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
A merry song we sang with him
Last year; impetuously we sang.

We ceased; a gentler feeling crept
Upon us: surely rest is meet.
'They rest,' we said, 'their sleep is sweet,'
And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;
Once more we sang: 'They do not die
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
Nor change to us, altho' they change;

'Rapt from the fickle and the frail
With gather'd power, yet the same,
Pierces the keen seraphic flame
From orb to orb, from veil to veil.'

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
Draw forth the cheerful day from night:
O Father, touch the east, and light
The light that shone when Hope was born.

CXXXI

O living will that shall endure
When all that seems shall suffer shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow thro' our deeds and make them pure,

That we may lift from out of dust
A voice as unto him that hears,
A cry above the conquer'd years
To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,
The truths that never can be proved
Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul.

THE BROOK

I COME from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,

And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silver water-break
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

I

Bury the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation;
Let us bury the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation;
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long, long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute!
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,

O fallen at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V

All is over and done.
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest forever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd,
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds.
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd,
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom.
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame,
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,

Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song!

VI

'Who is he that cometh, like an honor'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?'
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
His foes were thine; he kept us free;
O, give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs

Of his labor'd rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
Follow'd up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamor of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud Sabbath shook the spoiler down;
A day of onsets of despair!
Dash'd on every rocky square,
Their surging charges foam'd themselves away;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
Thro' the long-tormented air
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
And down he swept and charged and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world earthquake, Waterloo!
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O savior of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,

If love of country move thee there at all,
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim,
A people's voice,
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

VII

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers,
Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
We have a voice with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love and reverence and regret
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control!
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
And save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings!
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
But wink no more in scornful overtrust,
Remember him who led your hosts;
He bade you guard the sacred coasts.

Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
His voice is silent in your council-hall
For ever; and whatever tempests lour
For ever silent; even if they broke
In thunder, silent; yet remember all
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;
Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow
Thro' either babbling world of high and low;
Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life;
Who never spoke against a foe;
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
All great self-seekers trampling on the right.
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
Truth-lover was our English Duke;
Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be shamed.

VIII

Lo! the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars,
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story
The path of duty was the way to glory.
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,

He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story
The path of duty was the way to glory.
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he: his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure;
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory.
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumined cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not see.
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung.
O peace, it is a day of pain

For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain!
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere;
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane:
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will,
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears;
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears;
The black earth yawns; the mortal disappears;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
He is gone who seemed so great —
Gone, but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own

Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him,
God accept him, Christ receive him!

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

I

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' he said.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II

'Forward the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd.
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,

Cannon in front of them
  Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell
  Rode the six hundred.

IV

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
  All the world wonder'd.
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
  Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not,
  Not the six hundred.

V

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
  Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
  Left of six hundred.

VI

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

MILTON

(ALCAICS)

O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages;
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,
Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean
Rings to the roar of an angel onset!
Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
And bloom profuse and cedar arches
Charm as a wanderer out in ocean,
Where some refulgent sunset of India
Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
And crimson-hued the stately palm-woods
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

CROSSING THE BAR

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
  Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
  Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
  And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
  When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
  The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
  When I have crost the bar.

NOTES

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Now Welcom Somer. 2. *overshake*, shaken off.

5. *smale foules*, little birds. 9. *make*, mate.

What form of lyric does this exemplify? See Johnson's *Forms of English Poetry*, pp. 302–304.

How does the verse form affect the apparent spontaneity of the poem?

The Prologue. 11. *corages*, hearts.

14. *ferne halwes*, distant shrines.

16. *Caunterbury*. Where is Canterbury?

17. *holy blisful martir*, Thomas à Becket.

20. *Southwerk*. Where is this?

42. *wol I first biginne*. Why does Chaucer begin with the Knight?

51–66. *Alisaundre*, Alexandria; *Pruce*, Prussia; *Lettow*, Lithuania; *Ruce*, Russia; *Gernade*, Grenada; *Algezir*, Algeciras, in Spain; *Belmarye*, a town in Africa; *Lyeys*, *Satalye*, *Tramissene*, *Palatye*, towns in Asia Minor; *Grete See*, Mediterranean.

75. *gipoun*, shirt.

76. *bismotered with his habergeoun*, stained by his coat of mail.

81. *sëynt Loy*, St. Eligius, the patron saint of goldsmiths. Why should she invoke this saint?

85. *fetisly*, skillfully. 93. *lest*, pleasure. 95. *coppe*, cup.

108. *wastel-breed*, cake-bread, bread of the best quality.

110. *yerde*. Cf. *yardstick* and *yard*, a nautical term.

112. *wimpel*, face cloth. 113. *tretys*, well-formed.

120. *A peire of bedes, gauded, etc.*, a string of beads, of which every eleventh was a large green one. Why did she carry these?

127. *venerye*, hunting.

134. *seint Maure . . . seint Beneit*. The *reule* (rule) of St. Maur and that of St. Benedict were the oldest and strictest forms of monastic discipline.

145. *wood*, insane. 147. *swinken*, work.

148. *As Austyn bit*. St. Augustine made his cathedral clergy live strictly, like the monks.

150. *pricasour*, hard rider.

154–155. *purfiled . . . with grys*, edged with gray fur.

162. *stepe*, large. 163. *forneys of a leed*, cauldron.

166. *for-pyned*, wasted. 169. *Clerk*, university student.

174. *overest courtepy*, outer short coat.

180. *fithele, or gay sautrye*, musical instruments.

181. *philosophre*. The word is used in a double sense — alchemist and philosopher. Explain the humor.

194. *scathe*, harm.

198. *offring*, an allusion to the custom on 'Relic Sunday,' when the congregation went up to the altar to kiss the relics.

213–214. *At Rome, etc.* These were all famous shrines.

216. *Gat-tothed*, with teeth set far apart. 233. *sythes*, times.

261. *So that the wolf, etc.* Cf. *Lycidas*, ll. 116–129.

294. *Chepe*, Cheapside. 305. *herberwe*, inn.

326. *avys*, consideration. 335. *whylom*, formerly.

The metrical form is original with Chaucer. What other poets have employed it, and in what poems?

Does Chaucer fulfill the promise contained in lines 36–40?

Illustrate from the introductory lines what is meant by saying that Chaucer is the 'first great poet who really loved outward nature as the source of conscious pleasurable emotion.'

Chaucer has been called the most literal of poets. Does he portray life accurately? Are the personages he describes types or individuals? Would it be correct to call them individualized types?

With which of the characters does he seem most in sympathy?

What lines seem most satiric, most ironical? Is Chaucer ever cynical?

When Chaucer describes anything, it is usually by one of those simple and obvious epithets or qualities that are so easy to miss. Select a few of the best examples of character portrayal.

Which one of the Pilgrims disproves the truth of Leigh Hunt's remark that 'the Knight is the only character in Chaucer that seems faultless'?

Note the importance in the portrayal of each character of the last lines of the description.

Which of lines 126–168 do you consider most effective in the description?

Note the skillful transitions between the different groups of lines.

Lowell says that Chaucer's descriptive passages are remarkable for that combination of energy and simplicity which is among the rarest gifts in literature. Justify this statement.

BALLADS

Kemp Owyne. Characterize the movement of the ballad.

Does it seem to have been composed to be sung?

What can you say of the rhymes used?

What qualities of the fairy tale distinguish this ballad?

Compare this with other ballads in the management of the repetend.

Helen of Kirconnell. Compare this ballad, in its simplicity, directness, and charming crudeness, with any modern literary ballad, such as Longfellow's *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, and point out the differences.

What may you conclude about the state of society at the time these ballads were written?

Why were the best ballads composed in the borderland of Scotland and England?

Point out what Lowell calls the 'shuddering compression' of lines 5–9.

What stanza best exemplifies the quality of swiftness of movement? Which shows most savage sincerity of feeling?

Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne. 1. *shawes*, groves.
1. *sheene*, bright. 1. *shradds*, coppices. 5. *woodweele*, wood lark.
6. *a lyne*, of linden. 7. *wight*, strong. 12. *wrocken*, avenged.
13. *Sweavens*, dreams. 17. *Buske*, dress.
29. *capull-hyde*, horse hide. 36. *ffarley*, strange. 50. *slade*, glade.
59. *veiwe*, yew. 66. *boote*, aid. 95. *wilfull*, astray.
96. *tyde*, time. 110. *steven*, hour. 111. *shroggs*, twigs.
113. *in twinn*, apart. 150. *ffettled*, prepared.
151. *reacheles*, careless. 156. *may*, maid.
161. *awkwarde*, backhanded. This was conventionally the fatal stroke in ballads. 186. *lowe*, hillock. 207. *steven*, voice.
212. *belive*, soon. 218. *shrift*, confession.
224. *rawstye by the roote*, clotted at the butt.

Does the writer's personality intrude upon the ballad?

Notice that his sympathy is with Robin Hood. Why?

What are the qualities in Robin Hood that would make him appeal to the crowd?

What lines illustrate the religious or the superstitious nature of the foresters?

What is the purpose of the first two stanzas?

Point out passages where the method of narration seems especially naïve.

Where does the story move most rapidly?

Note the use of common words in common order.

What phrases are repeated? What passages show parallel structure?

Alliterative phrases form one of the conventional marks of the ballad. Point out some such phrases.

Do the ballads show much imagination in the figures of speech employed?

WYATT AND SURREY

Wyatt and Surrey are appropriately classed together in literary history because they began that important period known as the era of Italian influence. Perhaps their most important service was the introduction and naturalization of the Italian sonnet.

Their poems were first printed in a collection of verse called *Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557.

Which of these two sonnets shows more poetic feeling? Which is more reflective and sententious? Which shows more liveliness, grace, picturesqueness? Which contains the more clumsy or obscure lines? Which is the more masculine in tone? Which author is the better metrist? In which is there an abuse of alliteration?

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

The Lie. Though the authorship of this poem has been disputed, it is now generally assigned to Raleigh. Tradition says he wrote it on the night before his death.

2. *arrant*, errand.

16. *faction*, political party.

25. *brave it most*, are most ostentatious.

44. *tickle points of niceness*, uncertain and trivial questions.

49. *Physic.* Meaning? Cf. *physician.*

How in this poem is Raleigh's penetrating, satiric temper shown?

Does the poem show a morbid disgust with life, or a noble disdain of it?

Discuss and illustrate the extreme energy and conciseness of expression, pointing out the balanced structure of some of the lines.

Comment upon the simile in lines 7–8. Is it homely or far-fetched? Is it used to lend force, or clearness, or beauty?

What is the effect of the feminine rhymes in the seventh stanza?

What facts of Raleigh's life help to justify this indictment of Elizabethan society?

Even such is Time. These lines, Oldys tells us in his *Life of Raleigh*, were found in Raleigh's Bible at the Gatehouse Prison after his execution.

What is the significance of the tradition that so many of Raleigh's poems were written the night before his death?

EDMUND SPENSER

Prothalamion. This is the last complete poem by Spenser which is extant. Its complete title was: *Prothalamion, or a Spousall Verse made by Edm. Spenser, in honour of the double marriage of the two honorable and vertuous ladies, the Ladie Elizabeth and the Ladie Katherine Somerset, daughters to the right honourable the Earle of Worcester and espoused to the two worthie gentlemen M. Henry Gilford and M. William Peter, Esquyeres.*

3. *delay*, mollify. 4. *Titan's*. Who was Titan?

6–9. Explain this reference to Spenser's own experience by reading *Prosopopoia: or Mother Hubberds Tale*, ll. 905–918.

22. *greenish*. Why? *loose untyde*. It was customary for maiden-brides to wear their hair unbound. 27. *feateously*. Meaning?

30–33. What does each of the flowers symbolize? Cf. *Lycidas*, ll. 135 ff. 33. *vermeil*. Meaning?

38. *lee*, a small stream flowing into the Thames. 43. Who was Leda?

60. *them seem'd*. 'Them' is dative. 63. *teeme*. Meaning?

67. *bred of Somers-heat*, a punning allusion to the name Somerset.

95. *couplement*, union. 99. *All loves dislike*, distaste for love.

110. *undersong*. Meaning?

128. Name some other English poets who were born in London.

132. Who were the Knights Templar?

139. *that great lord*, Lord Leicester. In which of Scott's romances does he figure?

145. Who was the Earl of Essex?

177. *tide.* Meaning? Cf. 'Yule tide.'

What is meant by saying that Spenser's muse is more idyllic than lyrical? How does this poem illustrate the statement?

Spenser has succeeded better than any other English poet in finding or inventing metrical forms best fitted to express his thought. Point out the special fitness of this stanza form.

Is the poet ever cramped in the expression of his thought through the needs of the verse form?

Select some especially melodious lines.

What is the effect of the recurring refrain?

How do the 'run on' lines affect the flowing movement of the verse?

What is the rhyme scheme?

What seems to be Spenser's favorite form of alliteration?

Is the alliteration too evident in lines 104–105?

How does the influence of the classics appear in the poem?

Why has Spenser been called 'the poet's poet'?

The Faerie Queene is one of the longest poems ever written. Though only a little more than half finished, it consists of some four thousand nine-line stanzas. According to Spenser's plan, twelve knights, representing twelve virtues, were to have been sent on adventures from the court of Gloriana, Queen of Fairyland. The second book tells the story of Guyon, who represents chastity.

19. *a Lady.* Phædria, the bright or glittering one, who represents senseless mirth and idleness. 57. *aguize*, adorn.

93. *voyd*, uninhabited.

101. Lowell thinks this line characterizes the feeling Spenser's poetry gives us. Can you see why?

109 ff. Why is the movement of Stanza XIII especially musical?

126–135. Spenser makes Phædria speak of the flowers in a way that recalls Matthew vi. 26–29.

137. *Flowre-deluce*, the fleur-de-lys, or iris. 142. *Belamoure*, lover.

150. Milton undoubtedly had this passage in mind when he makes Comus use the same argument (*Comus*, ll. 706 ff.).

The meter in the *Faerie Queene* is Spenser's own invention. Describe fully this Spenserian stanza. Note, especially in the second stanza, how by the variety of the pauses Spenser has avoided monotony. What is the effect of the twelve-syllabled line at the end of each

stanza? Do any words seem coined to meet the needs of the rhyme?

Study the use of alliteration. Point out some subtle sound combinations. Do the alliterations ever become obtrusive? What different purposes are here served by the use of the device?

Spenser has been called the most fluent of our poets. Would this poem have been improved by greater conciseness in the expression?

What lines seem best to exemplify Spenser's keen sensitiveness to beauty?

How does Spenser's imagination differ from Chaucer's?

How does this selection help to confirm the belief expressed by Leigh Hunt, that if Spenser had not been a great poet, he would have been a great painter?

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

A Ditty. This little song Sidney afterward expanded into a sonnet, and inserted into the text of the *Arcadia*. The student may find it interesting to compare the two.

How does this poem illustrate the fact that the lyric reflects a mood, rather than symbolizes an event or presents a picture?

What feelings or emotions, other than those of love, may find expression in lyric poetry?

Sonnet XXXI. From *Astrophel and Stella*, a series of sonnets and songs addressed to Lady Penelope Devereux, who afterward became Lady Rich.

Are there any distinctly marked divisions in this sonnet?

To what does it owe its peculiarly beautiful melody?

JOHN LYLY

Apelles' Song. How does this poem illustrate what has been called the 'airy lightness' of Lyly's lyrics?

Which is more characteristic of this lyric, earnestness or grace?

What implied compliment to Campaspe is contained in the poem?

What in the poem is distinctly Elizabethan?

MICHAEL DRAYTON

Sonnet LXI. Is the conclusion of the sonnet as good poetically as the beginning?

Compare the thought with that of Shakespeare's *Sonnet CXVI.*

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To the Cambro-Britons and their Harp, his Ballad of Agincourt. Why should Drayton dedicate the poem to the Cambro-Britons?

17 19. Compare with Shakespeare's *Henry V*, IV, iii, 79 ff.

For an account of the battle of Agincourt see Gardiner's *Student's History of England*, p. 302, or Green's *History of the English People*, I, 542. How accurate is Drayton's description of the battle?

48. Explain this line.

82. *Bilbos*. Meaning? In what other sense is the word employed?

113. *Crispin's day*. When?

In what martial lyric does Tennyson employ the meter of this poem?

In what ballad does Longfellow use it?

What lines best illustrate Drayton's skill in the use of proper names in verse?

Point out the most vigorous lines.

What elements of the ballad characterize this poem?

Compare the close with that of *The Charge of the Light Brigade*.

Why have some good critics regarded this as the greatest war poem in English?

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Sonnets. XXIX. What is the Shakespearian sonnet form?

What are the different moods here portrayed? Are the transitions from one mood to another well made?

Which do you consider the best chosen adjective?

Which do you regard as the most suggestive line?

How is an unusual beauty of movement produced in line 11?

XXX. Which sonnet contains the more fine phrases, this or the preceding?

What effective use of assonance and alliteration may be noted?

XXXIII. Select the most suggestive words and phrases.

Study the changes in movement through the sonnet.

What is the 'pathetic fallacy'? See Johnson's *Elements of Literary Criticism*, p. 241. Should we condemn its use in this sonnet?

LXXIII. Study the structure of this sonnet, noting its development through comparisons. Which seems to you the most suggestive of the three comparisons; which the most beautiful?

Which line seems to you the most imaginative?

CXVI. Johnson's *Elements of Literary Criticism*, p. 165 ff., contains an excellent discussion of the 'thought movement' of this sonnet.

What is the emphatic word of line 9?

Tennyson in *Locksley Hall* has expressed the same thought of the permanence of true love.

How many sonnets did Shakespeare write, and to whom do they seem to be addressed?

Which of those studied do you consider the most beautiful, and why?

What are some of the recurrent ideas in these sonnets?

What phrases are the most memorable?

A Madrigal. The authenticity of this poem has been questioned, though it appeared with several of Shakespeare's poems in the poetical miscellany called *The Passionate Pilgrim*, 1599.

Does the accent fall upon the emphatic words?

Note the meter and its fitness for the expression of the balanced thoughts of the poem.

Find other illustrations of the fondness of the Elizabethans for artificial balance.

When icicles, etc. 9. *keel*, stir.

11. *saw*, long story, illustration. Cf. *As You Like It*, II, vii, 156.

14. *crabs*, apples.

What line serves as a refrain?

A good refrain should suggest the emotion of which the lyric as a whole is the expression. Is this a good refrain?

Point out the concrete and suggestive words in the poem, and tell what pictures they call forth.

Tell me, where is Fancy Bred. Notice that each of these songs voices the spirit of the play in which it is found. Thus, 'Tell me, where is fancy bred' is characteristic of the comedy (*The Merchant of Venice*) whose chief theme is love; while the two songs from *As You Like It* sound the lighter and the more somber tones of that comedy in which hatred ties the knot that love unties. Similarly, 'Cup us till the world goes round' voices the spirit of the full-blooded play (*Antony and Cleopatra*) in which it figures.

1. *fancy*, synonymous with love.

Why the change in the meter in the last four lines?

Scan the last two lines.

Under the Greenwood Tree. 3. *turn his merry note unto*, adapt it to. Cf. *to turn a tune*.

What is the purpose of the irregular movement of line 5?

Do you feel that this is the song of foresters or of court folk in the greenwood?

Blow, blow, thou Winter Wind. 2. *unkind*, unnatural. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, ii, 65.

In what respect may this and the preceding poem be called companion pieces?

How does this song differ in its spirit from *Winter*? Which is the more realistic?

Is there any similarity in the form of the two lyrics?

Which do you consider the more beautiful?

Intensity of feeling and perfection of form are in general characteristic of the lyric. Are they both present here?

Sigh no more, Ladies. It is noticeable that Shakespeare takes occasion to compliment himself upon its excellence in the words of Don Pedro that follow, 'By my troth, a good song.'

9. *moe.* An old form used often by Shakespeare, but usually altered by modern editors to 'more.'

10. *dumps.* Meaning?

12. *leavy*, the regular form of the word in Shakespeare.

O Mistress Mine. Compare the sentiment and spirit of this song with that of the other Shakespearian love lyrics, especially with the preceding song.

Take, O take those Lips Away. Is the singer a man or a woman?

Study the combination of sounds, one of the most masterly in the language.

Cup us till the World goes Round. 2. *eyne*, an old plural. Cf. *kine*. Johnson defines pink eye as 'a small eye.' Here the allusion is to the half-shut eyes of sleepy intoxication.

3. *fats.* Meaning?

5. *till the world goes round.* Meaning?

Of what mood is the drinking song the expression?

For what poetic excellencies should we look in a good drinking song?

Compare the spirit and movement of this song with that of *Willie Brew'd a Peck o' Maut*, by Burns.

Why are good convivial lyrics so rare in English as compared with German poetry?

Hark, Hark ! the Lark! Note the richness and beauty of suggestion in this little morning song.

In what line does the movement best suit the sentiment expressed?

What famous composer has set this song to music?

Fear no more the Heat o' the Sun. This dirge is sung by two young princes over the body of Fidele, supposedly a page, but really their sister Imogen.

11. *sceptre, learning, physic.* For what does each of these three words stand? Are they arranged in a climax?

14. *thunder-stone.* Meaning? 18. *Consign*, join thee in death.

19. *exorciser.* Meaning? 21. *unlaid*, by prayers or charms.

23. *consummation.* What does this word suggest more than *ending*?

What means are employed for giving the poem unity?

Lines 5 and 6 have been considered among the best Shakespeare ever wrote. Why?

How is a change of spirit indicated in the last stanza?

Compare with the tranquil dignity of this dirge the conceits of the dirge in *Romeo and Juliet*, V, iii, 12 ff.

Select a title that will convey the spirit of the poem.

Where the Bee Sucks. What elements in Ariel's nature are emphasized in the last lines, and how?

A Sea Dirge. What words in this dirge best characterize its tone?

Contrast the spirit of this dirge with that of the one from *Cymbeline*.

How do these Elizabethan songs differ from those written to-day?

Which of these lyrics would be most easily set to music?

Which of them rise to a climax?

Which do you consider the boldest or most daring figure in these songs?

THOMAS CAMPION

Fortunati Nimium, 'fortunate beyond measure.' The phrase is borrowed from Vergil, *Georg.* II, 458.

2. *still*, always.

8. *silver penny.* Silver pennies were in use till 1609.

9. *nappy ale*, strong ale, causing sleepiness.

12. *crabs.* Meaning? 19. *tutties*, nosegays.

32. *silly*, simple, happy. Cf. German *saelig.*

Point out the distinctively English coloring of this old lyric, *e.g.* in lines 16 and 23.

Observe the note of sincerity in the praise of country life.

Compare with this Marlowe's *Come live with Me and be my Love* (in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*). Which is the more conventional?

BEN JONSON

To Celia. Point out the evidence here that Jonson's songs combine with sincerity and intensity of emotion the utmost simplicity and musical quality of expression.

Should you characterize the song as spontaneous?

Which is the more graceful stanza?

Which expresses the more beautiful 'conceit,' this poem or *Apelles' Song?*

Hymn to Diana. Explain the mythological allusions.

How does this use of mythology affect the apparent sincerity of the *Hymn?*

Indicate some of the most beautiful repetitions of vowel sounds in the poem.

JOHN DONNE

A Hymn to God the Father. This poem, Walton tells us in his life of Donne, the author wrote during an illness. He tells us further that Donne had it 'set to a most grand and solemn tune,' and that it was often sung to the organ by the choristers of St. Paul's Church.

8. *door.* What is the exact meaning as used here?

15–16. What do you think of the word play in these lines?

Does the rugged meter contribute to the effect of sincerity and earnestness? How?

Point out how Donne's energy and fervor shine through even the obscurity and artificialities of the diction.

Indicate some of the most striking examples of the effective use of words.

Notice the firm structure of the poem, and show how the effect of compactness is secured.

What two differing tendencies in the poetry of the seventeenth century are represented by the poetry of Donne and that of Suckling respectively? See Saintsbury's *History of Elizabethan Literature*, or Masterman's *The Age of Milton.*

ROBERT HERRICK

The Argument of the Hesperides. 3. *hock-carts . . . wakes.* Look up in the dictionary.

8. *ambergris.* Meaning?

With which of the two great political parties of the time do you imagine Herrick sympathized?

Which of the details introduced suggests most vividly to you England of the seventeenth century?

Which line should you select as the most beautifully phrased?

The Hesperides is a collection of nearly thirteen hundred poems almost without orderly arrangement. Into what groups should you conclude, judging from these lines, that they might be divided?

To Daffodils. 2. *haste away so soon.* The daffodil is one of the earliest spring flowers. Cf. *Lycidas*, I, 150, and Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*, IV, iv, 118.

> . . . *daffodils,*
> *That come before the swallow dares, and take*
> *The winds of March with beauty.*

What qualities lend this poem its exquisite charm? Should you describe the poet's mood as that of sensuous reverie?

GEORGE HERBERT

Virtue. Herbert has been called 'the poet of a meditative and sober piety that is catholic alike in the wideness of its appeal and in its love of symbol and imagery.' How does this poem help to justify this estimate?

Which do you consider the most graceful stanza?

Herbert's imagery shows much over-elaboration, after the manner of Donne, whose disciple he was. How does this fact appear evident from the last stanza of this poem?

EDMUND WALLER

Old Age. These are the closing lines of Waller's poem *Divine Love*, dictated, it is said, on his deathbed. No other English poets, except Raleigh and Tennyson, have taken leave of life in words of such dignified composure. The inscription upon his tomb describes him as *inter poetas sui temporis facile princeps.* This estimate of Waller as the

greatest poet of his generation represents the deliberate verdict of the age of the Restoration upon his work.

5. *affection*, prejudice.

Waller had an important share in the development of the heroic couplet in English verse. Compare his use of it, as regards strength and finish, with any dozen lines from Pope.

What do you think of the 'conceit' in lines 7–8?

Does the adjective that Pope applies to Waller's verse seem particularly appropriate? See Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, l. 161.

JOHN MILTON

L'Allegro and **Il Penseroso** were written at Horton, whither Milton went after leaving Cambridge. The two poems, which should be studied together, are not to be thought of as antithetical. They simply represent different moods of, perhaps, the same man. Taken together, they form a comparison of the two kinds of enjoyment — that arising from innocent high spirits, and the deeper pleasure that results from meditation.

L'Allegro. 2. Who was *Cerberus?*

Here, as often, Milton makes his own mythology. According to classical mythology Erebus (Darkness) was the wife of Nox (Night).

3. *Stygian*. Meaning? 5. *uncouth*, unknown.

17. *some sager*, Milton himself. What follows is, again, Milton's own mythology.

29. Who was *Hebe?*

36. *mountain-nymph*. Why is Liberty so described? Cf. Wordsworth's *Thoughts of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland.*

38. *crew*. What change in meaning has this word undergone since Milton's day?

45. *in spite of sorrow*, to spite sorrow.

47–48. The sweet-briar and the eglantine are really the same plant.

55. *hoar hill*. Why 'hoar'?

67. *tells his tale*, counts his number (of sheep). What is a 'teller' in a bank?

71. *lawns*, open pastures. 80. *cynosure*. Find the derivation.

83. These names and those found in lines 86–88 are conventional pastoral names in the Classics.

87. *bower*. Exact meaning?

94. *rebecks sound.* What was a rebeck ?

104. *friar's lantern.* Meaning ?

120. *weeds of peace.* In what modern expression is this old meaning of 'weeds' retained ? *high triumphs.* The student may be interested to read Bacon's essay, *Of Masks and Triumphs.*

126. The English poets from Ben Jonson down have mistaken the Greek word σαόφρων (chaste, modest) for saffron. The latter is a word unknown to the Greek or Latin language. It comes through the French *safran* from the Arabic *zaphran.* The 'saophron' was a girdle worn by girls, indicative of chastity, and not yellow or saffron at all.

132. *Jonson's learnèd sock.* Ben Jonson's plays are composed according to classical standards, and show his wide learning. The 'sock' was a low shoe worn by the Greek comic actors.

133–134. This represents the prevalent conception of Shakespeare during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

136. *Lydian airs.* Lydian music was soft and voluptuous. See Spenser, *Faerie Queene,* III, i, 40.

138. *pierce.* This word in Milton's day was pronounced so as to rhyme with verse.

144. Compare *Merchant of Venice,* V, i, 61.

145. Who was Orpheus ?

In writing line 125 may Milton have been thinking of the last scene of *As You Like It?* What other line in the poem suggests the same play?

Point out the suggestiveness of such phrases as 'wreathèd smiles, 'wrinkled care.'

How does line 89 prove that Milton was not confining himself to an account of the pleasures of one particular day?

To what country pleasures does Milton allude in lines 91–116?

Compare the pleasures of the cheerful man with those suggested in *Paradise Lost,* IX, 445–453.

Il Penseroso. 3. *bested,* help.

6. *fond.* In what modern phrase is this meaning of 'fond' retained?

10. *Morpheus.* Who was he ? Cf. *morphine.* Read Spenser, *Faerie Queene,* I, i, 39–40.

15. *weaker,* here a comparative.

18. Who was Prince Memnon? He is not known to have had a sister.

19. Who was Cassiopea?

23–24. What sources of joy are symbolized by Vesta and Saturn? This ancestry is Milton's own invention.

29. *Ida*, a mountain in Crete, one of Saturn's favorite haunts.

33. *grain*, purple. 35. *sable stole*, black tunic. Cypress lawn is crêpe.

36. *decent*. Meaning? 55. *hist*, a verb, to bring silently.

56. Who was Philomel? 57. *plight*, mood.

59. *Cynthia*. Milton has given to Cynthia, the moon, the dragons anciently assigned to Demeter.

64. *woo*, bend. 74. *curfew*. Find the derivation of the word.

83. *the bellman's, etc.* The night watchman, who went about ringing a bell and calling out the hours, ended each announcement with the singing of a verse.

87. *outwatch the Bear*, sit up all the night. This constellation does not set.

88. *Hermes*, Hermes Trismegistus. Who was he?

98. *sceptred pall*, royal robe. 102. *buskined stage*. Meaning?

104–105. Who was Musæus?

109. Chaucer, whose *Squiere's Tale* was left unfinished. It was completed by Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, IV, II and III.

116. Milton refers to Spenser and to the Italian poets, Ariosto and Tasso.

124. *Attic boy*, Cephalus. 134. *brown*, dark.

134. *Sylvan*. Who was Sylvanus?

147–150. What is the meaning of these lines?

156. *studious cloister's pale*. Does Milton mean a university or a monastery?

The student may be interested to determine what suggestions Milton may have derived from the song in Fletcher's *The Nice Valour*. This song is reprinted in the notes to *Il Penseroso* in Hale's *Longer English Poems*.

Why are vain, deluding joys spoken of as having no father? May it be because they are thought of as undisciplined?

Spenser (*Faerie Queene*, I, x, 46) portrays Contemplation as an old man; Milton as a cherub. Which is better?

Into what three groups may the night's reading be divided?

What word near the close of the poem suggests Milton's persistent purpose to do what he afterward attempted in *Paradise Lost* — 'justify the ways of God to men'?

What is the significance of Milton's choosing for these poems Italian titles?

Compare the introductions of the two poems. Which seems the more conventional? Is there any trace of Puritanism in either?

What is the prevailing meter in both, and what variations do you observe?

What difference is there in the music preferred by the cheerful and the contemplative man respectively?

Note the difference in the evening pleasures chosen by each.

In which poem does the first personal pronoun often occur? What conclusion would you draw from this difference?

What other indications are there that Milton liked contemplation better than mirth?

Of what significance are line 57 in *L'Allegro* and line 65 in *Il Penseroso* in deciding which poem was written first?

How is nature treated in the two poems — as reflecting a mood, or is it described for its own sake?

Illustrate the manner in which Milton tinges his descriptive passages with human emotion and interest.

Lycidas was inserted in the second of two small volumes of poems in Greek, Latin, and English, contributed by the Cambridge friends and college fellows to the memory of Edward King. The poem is a pastoral elegy. Theocritus, Bion, and Vergil are among the masters whom Milton followed.

1ff. Milton's modesty is, no doubt, partly conventional and assumed.

5–7. Compare the thought suggested by Milton's sonnet *On his being arrived at the Age of Twenty-three*.

7. *compels*. Why in the singular rather than in the plural?

8. *dead, dead*. Note the repetition. Find other cases of the use of repetition and describe their effect.

13. This alliteration in *w* was a favorite one with Milton.

15. Who were the nine Muses; and what was the Pierian spring?

25. *lawns*. Cf. *L'Allegro*, l. 71.

26. See Job iii. 9.

28. *gray-fly*, trumpet fly.

29. *battening*. Meaning?

30. In the first draft Milton wrote, 'Oft till the even-star bright . . . had sloped his burnisht wheel.' Which reading do you prefer, and why?

34. Distinguish between satyrs and fauns.

36. Attempts have been made to identify Damœtas with one of Milton's instructors at Cambridge. The name is used by Theocritus and by Vergil.

38. What is the force of 'must'?

40. *gadding*. Exact meaning?

54. *Mona*, Anglesey. 'The shaggy top is the high interior of Anglesey, the island fastness of the Druids, once thick with woods.' —*Masson*.

55. *Deva*. The river Dee forms the old boundary between England and Wales. It was once believed that by some changes in its bed or current the river gave the inhabitants of the region through which it flowed intimations of coming good or ill.

58. Calliope. See *Paradise Lost*, VII, 32–38.

59. *her enchanting son*. Why is this adjective employed?

65. What is meant by 'shepherd's trade'?

70. *spirit*, to be scanned as one syllable.

72. Milton seems to mean that the really great man has only one human weakness — the ambition to be famous.

75. Atropos was really a Fate, not a Fury. In what other instances has Milton taken liberties with classical mythology?

77. Why should *Phœbus* reply?

79. *foil*. Meaning?

85–86. These rivers are associated with pastoral poetry. Mincius is a river near Vergil's birthplace; Arethuse, a spring near Syracuse in Sicily, where Theocritus lived.

89. *herald of the sea*, Triton.

96. *Hippotades*, Æolus, son of Hippotes.

99. *Panope*, one of the fifty sea nymphs, daughters of Nereus. Read Spenser, *Faerie Queen*, IV, XI, 49.

103. *Camus*, a personification of Cambridge University situated on the river Cam.

106. Who was Hyacinth?

108–131. Upon the whole passage read Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies*, paragraphs 20–25.

142. *rathe*. Meaning? Cf. *rather*.

143. *crow-toe*, the hyacinth.

149. *amaranthus*. The plant was the ancient emblem of immortality.

151. *laureate.* Meaning? Cf. *poet laureate. hearse.* For derivation see Murray's *New English Dictionary.*

160. *fable of Bellerus old*, place fabled to have been the haunt of Bellerus, a personage invented by Milton. The name was suggested by the Roman name of Land's End — Bellerium.

162. The coast of Spain is referred to.

176. *nuptial song.* See Rev. xiv. 3 and xxi. 9.

192. *twitched*, caught up as if in haste, having tarried too long.

How does *Lycidas*, as compared with *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, show in Milton an increasing seriousness?

Is the elegy an expression of personal grief or a tribute of respect?

Would the poem have gained or lost, if the grief expressed had been more personal?

Discuss Dr. Johnson's charge that the poem is both artificial and insincere.

Indicate the changes of mood of the poet throughout the course of the elegy.

Show that some passages in the poem exhibit an increasing fervor of emotion.

What is the meter of *Lycidas?*

Read Longfellow's sonnet *Milton*, and illustrate its truth from this poem — particularly the lines —

So in majestic cadence rise and fall
The mighty undulations of thy song.

Point out ten lines of blank verse, and describe the effect upon the poem of the occasional lack of rhyme.

What rhyme predominates through the first fourteen lines, and what is the effect of the repetition?

What is the metrical structure of *ottava rima* as illustrated by the last eight lines of the poem?

Note the instances where Milton has placed the adjective after the noun, or has used the order of adjective, noun, adjective. What has he gained by such an arrangement?

What do you understand by the pastoral manner as illustrated by this poem? Why is the pastoral a more artificial manner for English than for Greek poetry?

What justification is there for Milton's mingling of pagan mythology with Christian belief?

How do lines 70 ff. illustrate Milton's own spirit in entering upon the poetical career?

In what other lines does the personal element appear in the elegy?

On the Late Massacre in Piedmont. — The title refers to the Vaudois persecution carried on by the Duke of Savoy in 1655. This religious butchery aroused the deepest indignation in England. As Latin secretary to the Commonwealth Milton had drafted Cromwell's protest against the atrocities which the Vaudois were enduring. This sonnet has been called 'a collect in verse.' Why?

4. *When all our fathers, etc.* Before the Reformation, when England was a Catholic country. The Vaudois, or Waldenses, were followers of Peter Waldo of Lyons. They had been forced to leave France, and had settled in the canton Vaud. Many believed that their religion was the primitive apostolic Christianity. Milton refers to this belief in the next line.

12. *triple tyrant*, the Pope, whose tiara is surrounded by the triple crown.

14. *Babylonian woe*, the doom shortly to be visited upon Babylon (Rev. xviii), Babylon being thought by Milton to symbolize the Roman Catholic Church.

Show how by the use of the long open vowels Milton illustrates in this poem the subtle effects of melody.

Show how in the first long, rolling sentence the rhymes do not interrupt the emphasis.

With what passage in *Lycidas* may this poem be compared as an example of Milton's moral earnestness?

On his Blindness. Milton's sight, injured by over-use during his Latin secretaryship, had begun to fail in 1651. By 1652 or 1653 the disease had progressed so far as wholly to destroy his sight. His blindness, however, inspired some of the most splendid passages in his poetry. Read the famous apostrophe to light in the beginning of the third book of *Paradise Lost*.

2. *Ere half my days.* Milton became blind at about the age of forty-four. Possibly he was thinking here of his working years, and so did not take into account the years of his immaturity.

3. *that one talent.* See Matt. xxv. 14 ff.

8. *fondly.* Cf. *Il Penseroso*, l. 6.

8. *prevent*, anticipate.

10. *who.* The omission of the antecedent is a Latinism.

12. Compare with the thought of this and the following lines Milton's *Hymn on the Nativity*, ll. 243–244.

What evidently was Milton's attitude toward bodily affliction?

How does the Miltonic differ from the Shakespearian sonnet as regards the arrangement of the rhymes?

Compare with line 14 the last stanza of Longfellow's *A Psalm of Life*. Which is the nobler expression of the thought?

Milton's work is said to be characterized by harmony rather than by melody. What do you understand by the statement? Is it wholly true? Read Winchester's *Principles of Literary Criticism*, p. 271.

Discuss the justice of the charge that Milton is a poet of books rather than of nature.

Point out passages where the sound and the movement are especially in keeping with the thought.

Are there any traces in Milton's minor poetry of the prevalent poetical vices of his age? Is there any over-classicism? Are there any conceits? Is he ever sensual? Is he ever, like Donne, over-subtle?

With all Milton's sensitiveness to beauty, there is in his nature a trend toward asceticism. How does this appear in his poetry?

Beauty and sublimity are the dominant characteristics of Milton's poetry. In which of the poems studied is each of these characteristics most apparent? In which are they found united?

How can you account for the fact that Milton is second only to Spenser in his influence upon the lyric poets that followed him?

JOHN SUCKLING

Why so Pale and Wan?

12. *take*, charm.

Mr. Gosse says Suckling's lyrics owe their special charm to their gallantry and impudence, their manly ardor, and their frivolous audacity. Show how these qualities are illustrated here.

How are Suckling's poems typical of the age in which they were written?

SAMUEL BUTLER

Hudibras, the burlesque epic, was the only long poem of any considerable literary merit which the Cavaliers could offset against the Puritan

epic, *Paradise Lost*. The first part appeared in 1662. It was tremendously popular. Butler says of Charles II,

He never ate, nor drank, nor slept
But Hudibras still near him kept.

It is an expression of the reaction against the Puritans that characterized the Restoration period. The hero is a Puritan justice of the peace, who, with Ralph, his squire, goes forth to stop the amusements of the people. The characters and their experiences are similar to those of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*. The interest of the poem to modern readers is not so much in the satire as in the continuous flashes of wit. It is the wittiest poem in the language.

10. *bind o'er*, bind over to the sessions, as justice of the peace.

24. Montaigne, in his essays, supposes his cat thought him a fool for wasting his time in playing with her.

52. *analytic*. A part of logic that teaches to decline and construe reason as grammar does words.

79. *Babylonish dialect*, a confusion of languages. Babylon was erroneously supposed to have been named from the Tower of Babel. See Gen. xi. 1–8.

How do these extracts show that Butler's estimate of human nature was low?

Show how they exemplify his facility in rhyming. What rhymes come as a surprise?

How do these excerpts illustrate his power in detecting odd or unexpected analogies?

What does he satirize in the different extracts?

Does satiric poetry attempt to portray characters as they really are?

An illuminating article upon the nature and history of satire will be found in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. IX.

In what does the satire consist — irony, or parody, or caricature?

Why are satires likely to become hard reading for people of an age later than that for which they were written?

Select some of the most quotable couplets.

RICHARD LOVELACE

To Althea, etc. Lovelace was imprisoned in 1642, just before the Civil War. Althea is the fanciful name which he applies to his sweetheart, Lucy Sacheverell. Upon a false report of his death, she promptly married another.

5. Cf. *Lycidas*, ll. 67–69.
7. *wanton*. Cf. *L'Allegro*, l. 27.
10. *allaying Thames*, water to dilute the wine.
17. *committed*, caged.
28. *That*. Meaning?

Compare this poem with Suckling's *I prithee send me back my Heart*, as an expression of chivalrous devotion.

The different stanzas are of unequal merit. Select the best two.

To Lucasta, on going to the Wars. Gray, criticising some verses that Mason had sent him, wrote : 'Extreme conciseness of expression, yet pure, perspicuous, and musical, is one of the great beauties of lyric poetry.' Show how this poem meets these requirements.

HENRY VAUGHAN

The Retreat. This is the first instance of that sense of the holiness of childhood, with its mysterious nearness to the divine, which has appeared so often in English poetry. Shelley's *Lament*, the last stanza of Hood's *I remember, I remember*, Lamb's *Sonnet XI*, and Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality* — all embody more or less fully the same idea. It is a modification of Plato's doctrine of metempsychosis. Find out what this was by reference to any encyclopedia.

What is meant by saying that Vaughan is a devout mystic ?

What is the difference between the spirit of Vaughan and that of Herbert, as illustrated by this poem and *Virtue?*

JOHN DRYDEN

Mac Flecknoe. Richard Flecknoe, an inferior poet of the age, had died in 1678. Thomas Shadwell, who is satirized as Mac Flecknoe, or the son of Flecknoe, was a much better poet than Dryden here represents him. At the accession of William and Mary, Shadwell superseded Dryden as poet-laureate.

25. The humor here is heightened by the fact that, in striking contrast with Shadwell, Flecknoe was extremely thin.

29. The dramatists Thomas Heywood and James Shirley were very voluminous writers.

30. Explain the allusion.

33. Shadwell was from Norfolk. The *Drugget* seems to have been considered characteristic of poor poets.

What is the verse form employed? Does Dryden use it with ease?

Indicate some lines made more effective by the use of balance.

What phrases in the poem would Dryden's contemporaries be most likely to remember? Why?

Compare Dryden's satire with Butler's. Which is the more forceful? the more bitter? the more humorous? Which contains proportionally the more quotable phrases?

A Song for St. Cecilia's Day. The song was written for the celebration of the musical festival of St. Cecilia in 1687. It was customary to secure from some well-known poet a poem to be set to music and sung at this festival. In 1697 the anniversary song was Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*. That for 1708 was furnished by Pope.

1–2. This idea, said to have been first advanced by Pythagoras, that order in the universe is a kind of orchestral harmony, that the stars in their courses move harmoniously (the music of the spheres), is frequently found in poetry of the seventeenth century. Cf. Milton, *Hymn on the Nativity*, l. 125.

5. *heave her head.* Notice the use of Miltonic phrases. Cf. *L'Allegro*, l. 145.

8. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, II, 898.

15. What was the *diapason? closing?* Cf. Herbert's *Virtue*, l. 11.

17. Who was Jubal? See Gen. iv. 21.

41. *dame.* Meaning?

47. The age of Dryden was not a particularly reverent one. Cf. the last lines of *Alexander's Feast*.

50. *Sequacious.* Is this a poetic word; if not, why? It was characteristic of Dryden to use it.

60. *pageant.* Meaning?

61. *trumpet.* What trumpet is meant? See I Cor. xv. 52.

63. *untune*, dissolve the universal order by destroying the harmonious relations of the planetary system.

Who was St. Cecilia?

What is the history of the invention of the organ?

Point out instances of the abruptness, conciseness, and energy of the style in the poem.

Is the poem melodious?

Where is the sound of the lines especially well adapted to the sense?

How, without changing the meter, is the effect of rapidity of movement produced in the fifth stanza as compared with the fourth?

Is there any emotion apparent in the poem, or is it wholly rhetorical? Is it sincere?

Are there any striking 'conceits' in this poem?

The poem was composed to be sung. Point out what parts seem adapted to certain kinds of voices, and indicate to the accompaniment of what musical instruments these parts should be sung.

MATTHEW PRIOR

An Ode. 3–4. Euphelia and Chloe were conventional names in pastoral poetry.

What are the characteristics of good society verse? See Johnson's *Forms of English Poetry*, Chapter VII. Show that *An Ode* exemplifies these characteristics.

Select a title for the poem.

JOHN GAY

Go, Rose, my Chloe's Bosom grace. Waller has treated the same theme in his *Go, lovely Rose*.

It is characteristic of many of the love songs of this age that the lover is ready to die for his passion. The poem is also typical of the age in the name given the beloved, and in the classical nature of its single allusion.

O, Ruddier than the Cherry. Why is the rhyme scheme a well-chosen one?

In what different ways is sprightliness secured in this song?

ALEXANDER POPE

An Essay on Criticism. This poem was probably begun in 1707 and was published in 1711, when Pope was twenty-three.

16. *Pierian spring.* Hippocrene on Mt. Helicon, the home of the Muses, is meant.

47. Possibly the Pantheon, more probably St. Peter's.

67. *La Mancha's Knight*, Don Quixote. The story here referred to is not in Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, but is taken from La Sage's *Nouvelles Aventurs de Don Quichotte*.

70. *Dennis*, a small critic and dramatist of Pope's time. The two were bitter enemies.

80. *Stagyrite*, Aristotle, who was born in Stagira, in Thrace.

108. *content*, trust.

128. *Fungoso in the play*, a poor student in Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, who endeavors to copy the dress of the courtier, Sir Briske. — *Reed's note.*

174–183. Read Dryden's *Alexander's Feast.* 191. *approve*, test.

Do any of Pope's precepts seem obvious or commonplace ?

Point out several passages where Pope illustrates in his own verse the point he would enforce.

The student should here learn something of classicism and romanticism, their nature and their struggle in this century. Beer's *History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century*, Newcomer's *English Literature*, and Moody and Lovett's *History of English Literature* are to be recommended.

An Essay on Man. 42. Scan the line.

35–36. *Fault and ought* were probably perfect rhymes in Pope's age. Do you note any other rhymes that sound imperfect?

67. *science.* Meaning?

68. *solar walk*, the earth's elliptic. *milky way.* The ancient opinion that the souls of the just went thither. — *Pope's note.*

Does the *Essay* show a logical sequence of ideas?

Which of the two extracts contains the more valuable ideas? Which shows the better management of meter?

Why is the couplet the best verse form for such a writer as Pope?

Read aloud a number of lines. Do the couplets become tiresome? Give reasons for your answer.

Could the ideas advanced in these selections have been expressed in prose? What is gained by the use of the heroic couplet rather than prose?

What lines best illustrate Pope's love of antithesis and balance?

Do any lines or phrases seem notably artificial?

Do you think that Pope spent much time in polishing his work?

What passages show an acute observation of society?

Do you imagine Pope a lover of nature?

What else do you learn from these extracts concerning Pope's character and tastes?

Next to Shakespeare, Pope is probably the most quoted of the English poets. Why? Select the familiar quotations.

Why have some critics denied that Pope was a poet?

Summarize the different qualities that made Pope the model of English poets for over a century.

JAMES THOMSON

From **Winter.** What are the different indications in the poem that Thomson was a close observer of nature?

Which should you select as the most picturesque detail in the description?

What details well illustrate Thomson's power of presenting the common so that it seems uncommon?

Do any of the words used impress you as ponderous?

Point out some words or phrases that are characteristic of the age.

Compare Thomson with some of his contemporaries as a maker of felicitous phrases.

Study carefully the sentence structure. Do you note any mannerisms of style?

What qualities made this poem for many years one of the most popular in the language?

Rule, Britannia. With the beginning compare that of Drake's *The American Flag*. The latter poem may be read in Long's *American Poems*, p. 36.

Point out some words that are characteristic of eighteenth-century diction.

Why has this been one of the most popular of the British national songs? Is the song distinctly British? Is the refrain impressive? Is the poem too long for a good song? In singing, what stanzas might best be omitted?

Compare it as a national song with Key's *The Star-spangled Banner*

CHARLES WESLEY

Jesus, Lover of my Soul. This hymn was first published in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1740) as a hymn consisting of five eight-line stanzas, with the title 'In Temptation.'

1–4. These four lines have been altered in no less than twenty different ways. Because 'Lover' was thought undignified, later editors substituted such words as 'Refuge,' 'Saviour,' etc. What is the effect of such substitutions upon the beauty and pathos of the line?

2. This line has been changed as follows: —

To thy sheltering arms we fly,
To thy sheltering cross we fly,
Let me to thy mercy fly.

Discuss these changes.

3. In some versions the line is altered in one of the following ways: —

While the billows near me roll,
While the raging billows roll,
While the threatening waters roll.

Discuss the effect of these substitutions. Is it possible that by the original phrase 'nearer waters' Wesley meant to suggest the local and temporary troubles which perplex the individual, as local storms sometimes assail ships at sea?

What accounts for the fact that a good hymn which is at the same time good poetry is extremely rare?

How is a strict regard to dogmatic theology likely to affect the play of imagination essential to poetry?

Point out the poetic qualities of this hymn, showing that the emotion it expresses is a universal one, that it is independent of any particular creed, and that it is simple, sincere, and deep.

THOMAS GRAY

Elegy written in a Country Churchyard. Gray probably began the *Elegy* in 1742, but did not finish it till 1750. He is thought to have had in mind the churchyard at Stoke-Pogis.

2. *wind.* Why better than *winds*, as it is sometimes printed?

11. *bower.* Exact significance? What line in *L'Allegro* helps to explain its meaning?

13. The rich were buried within the church; the poor without in the churchyard.

22 ff. With this compare Burns's *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, ll. 24–25 and ll. 43–44. Which phrasing do you prefer, and why?

41. What custom, especially prevalent at that time, is here referred to?

43. *provoke.* Meaning?

56. Why did Gray change the original reading of *Cato*, *Tully*, and *Cæsar* to *Hampden*, *Milton*, and *Cromwell?*

93–96. What reminders of Milton, one of Gray's masters, are in this stanza?

113. What sound makes the line move slowly and heavily?

116. Here was originally inserted —

There scatter'd oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen, are show'rs of violets found;
The red-breast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.

Why did Gray decide to omit this stanza?

119. *Science.* Meaning?

Why has the *Elegy* been, possibly, the most popular of English poems?

Has the subject-matter contributed much to this popularity?

Are originality and depth of thought necessary to make a poem live?

Is the *Elegy* more effective for dealing with lowly life?

Show how the time, place, and surroundings are in thorough keeping with the thought expressed.

What are the best-known stanzas? Why?

Read the explanation of a felicitous phrase in Johnson's *Elements of Literary Criticism*, p. 196. Select the felicitous phrases in this poem.

What lines are especially musical?

Note the use of abstract nouns, a feature characteristic of the poetry of Gray's age. What would be gained, and what lost, by employing more concrete terms?

What spirit animates the last stanza?

The Bard was begun in 1754, but was not finished till 1757. This poem is possibly the best illustration in English of the Pindaric ode. The story on which the Ode is founded is not historical.

13. *Glo'ster.* 'Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester and Hereford,

had, in 1283, conducted the war in South Wales ; and after overthrowing the enemy near Llandulo Tawr had reënforced the King in the Northwest.' — *Hales*.

28. *Hoel, etc.* Various unsuccessful attempts have been made to identify these bards. Perhaps it is sufficient to note that in most instances the names are Welsh.

55. 'Edward the Second, cruelly butchered in Berkley Castle.' — *Gray*. This castle is near the Severn.

57. *She-wolf of France*, 'Isabel of France, Edward the Second's adulterous queen.' — *Gray*. Cf. Shakespeare's *III Henry VI*, I, iv.

60. Edward the Third, who successfully invaded France, but who afterwards died in 'Sorrow' and 'Solitude.'

67. 'Edward, the Black Prince, died some time before his father.' — *Gray*.

71. 'Magnificence of Richard the Second's reign.' — *Gray*.

79. Richard II was believed to have been starved to death.

83. The wars between York and Lancaster.

87. 'Henry the Sixth, George, Duke of Clarence, Edward, the Fifth Richard, Duke of York, etc., believed to have been murdered secretly in the Tower of London. The oldest part of this tower is vulgarly attributed to Julius Cæsar.' — *Gray*.

89. *Consort's faith.* Margaret of Anjou was the wife of the *Meek Usurper*, Henry VI. She 'struggled hard to save her husband and his crown.'

93. 'The silver boar was the badge of Richard Third ; whence he was usually known in his own time by the name of *the Boar*.' — *Gray*.

99. *half of thy heart*. Eleanor, wife of Edward I, died suddenly in 1270, about five years after his conquest of Wales.

109–110. 'It was the common belief of the Welsh nation that King Arthur was still alive in Fairyland, and would return again to rule over Britain.' — *Gray*. The Welsh regarded the prophecy as fulfilled by the accession of the Tudors to the throne of Britain.

115. *form divine*, Elizabeth.

128. *buskin'd measures*, Shakespeare's. 131. Milton.

133. 'The succession of poets after Milton's time.' — *Gray*.

137. What line from *Lycidas* is here recalled?

Name some of the famous odes in English.

What is the form of the Pindaric ode? See Johnson's *Forms of English Poetry*, Chapter IV.

What are the advantages and what the disadvantages of the highly artificial stanza form of the ode?

What is the effect of the varying length of the lines?

What lines serve as a refrain?

Are there any defective rhymes?

What phrases show Gray as a close student of Milton?

The poem met with a cold reception on account of its alleged obscurity. Is the charge just?

WILLIAM COLLINS

A Song from Shakespeare's Cymbeline. This poem is based on *Cymbeline*, IV, ii.

Compare this with Shakespeare's *Fear no more the Heat o' the Sun*. What lines from the two poems express similar thoughts? Which poem shows the deeper feeling?

What phrases from *L'Allegro* are here recalled?

Have any of the words here employed now gone out of general poetic use?

Ode to Evening. 7. *brede*. Meaning?

What is the effect of the peculiar metrical form employed? Would the poem have gained or lost had it been written in rhyme?

Are the details well chosen to reflect the spirit of evening? Do they blend into a whole, or do they form a number of separate pictures?

Point out the lines where the sound best reflects the sense.

What echoes of Milton and of Gray do you note?

Do any of the phrases seem artificial?

Is the ending especially appropriate?

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

The Deserted Village. 1. *Auburn*. In writing this poem Goldsmith has undoubtedly drawn upon the experiences of his youth at Lissoy, Ireland. In the schoolmaster he has probably portrayed his old teacher, one Paddy Byrne. There is nothing, however, distinctly Irish about the village.

12. *decent*. Meaning?

28. *smutted*, by being induced to make signs on his face, while holding a saucer blackened on the under surface. This is an old English country trick.

122. *vacant.* Meaning?

141. Where else has Goldsmith portrayed the character of the village preacher? To what extent was Goldsmith indebted to Chaucer's picture of the poor parson? See *The Prologue*, ll. 225 ff.

181. With this compare the description of Sir Roger de Coverley at the close of the service. Which description is the kindlier?

193 ff. What different qualities in this description of the schoolmaster make it one of the best parts of the poem?

209. *tides.* Meaning?

232. *The twelve good rules.* '1. Urge no healths; 2. Profane no divine ordinances; 3. Touch no state matters; 4. Reveal no secrets; 5. Pick no quarrels; 6. Make no comparisons; 7. Maintain no ill opinions; 8. Keep no bad company; 9. Encourage no vice; 10. Make no long meals; 11. Repeat no grievances; 12. Lay no wagers.'

265. What do you think of Goldsmith's argument? Are such conditions as he describes the necessary outcome of manufacture and trade, with the consequent increase in wealth?

316. *artist.* Meaning?

344. *Altama.* The Altamaha in Georgia. Can you see any reason for Goldsmith's choosing this stream?

418. *Torno's cliffs.* 'There is a river Tornea flowing into the Gulf of Bothnia, and forming a part of the boundary between Sweden and Russia. There is also a Lake Tornea in the extreme northern part of Sweden. *Pambamarca* is said to be a mountain near Quito.' — *Rolfe.*

427–430. These lines were added by Dr. Johnson. Do they make a good ending?

What qualities combine to make Goldsmith easy reading?

What are some of the most quotable couplets?

What passages illustrate his ability to pass rapidly from one emotion to another?

What lines show Goldsmith's keen observation of minute, but significant details?

Discuss the statement made by Macaulay that the village is English in its prosperity and Irish in its adversity.

What evidence exists in the poem that Goldsmith's knowledge of America was defective?

Is the poem classic or romantic in the following respects: the meter; the diction; the attitude toward nature; the attitude toward society?

Compare Goldsmith's attitude toward the poor with Gray's.

Thackeray calls Goldsmith the best beloved of English writers. Why?

When Lovely Woman stoops to Folly. Note the effect of the skillful combination of vowels and consonants, and of the alternation of masculine and feminine rhymes.

What lines of the *Deserted Village* seem like an elaboration of the idea in this poem?

WILLIAM COWPER

On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture out of Norfolk. Cowper's mother died in 1737, when he was six years old. Over fifty years, many of them clouded with insanity, had passed when Cowper wrote these lines.

1. *Life has passed*, etc. This passage gains much from what it suggests, but leaves unsaid. Can you point out other instances of repression?

88. Point out some other passages that seem trite or conventional.

108. Cowper was of gentle birth.

Do you think the poem was carefully planned?

Are any of the lines obscure? Do any of them move heavily?

Note the naïve details introduced. Do they add charm and beauty?

Select the lines voicing the deepest emotion.

How does the poem, in its verse form, in diction, and in thought reflect the spirit of the age?

What is meant by saying that Cowper is preëminently the poet of the middle classes?

WILLIAM BLAKE

To the Evening Star. What effective use of contrast is here introduced? What consonant sounds recur most frequently, and what is the effect? How does this poem differ in spirit from most of the work of the age?

Mad Song. Express the thought of the poem in a single sentence.

Line 7 is sometimes printed,

And the rustling birds of morn

Which is the better reading? What variations has Blake employed in the metrical structure and rhyme scheme? What is the effect of these variations? Which should you call the most musical quatrain of the poem, and why?

Songs of Innocence. Introduction. By what different means is the effect of simplicity here produced?

This poem has been frequently set to music. Why does it make a good song?

Does the touch of symbolism increase or lessen the beauty of the poem?

What characteristics of the Elizabethan songs does this recall?

ROBERT BURNS

To a Mouse. 4. *brattle*, hurry. 6. *pattle*, stick for cleaning the plow. 15. *daimen-icker*, an occasional ear of corn; *thrave* is twenty-four sheaves. 17. *lave*, rest. 21. *big*, build. 24. *snell*, sharp. 34. *But*, without. 35. *thole*, bear. 36. *cranreuch*, hoarfrost.

Is the poem the expression of genuine emotion?

What lines are most often quoted?

Is the poem well proportioned?

How does the poem illustrate the breadth of Burns's sympathy?

How does the personal note in the last stanza throw light upon the whole poem?

The Cotter's Saturday Night. 1. **friend**, Robert Aiken. He was an accomplished reader, who, Burns declared, had 'read' the poet 'into fame.'

10. *sugh*. Why did Burns use this word? What kind of word is it?
26. *kiaugh*, care. 27. *toil*. Pronunciation?
28. *Belyve*, presently. 30. *ca'*, drive. *tentie rin*, attentive run.
34. *braw*, brave, fine. 35. *penny-fee*, wages.
38. *spiers*, inquires. 40. *uncos*, news. 48. *eydent*, diligent.
49. *jauk*, trifle. 64. *ben*, within.
67. *cracks*. Meaning? Cf. 'a crack player.' 69. *blate*, bashful.
72. *lave*, rest. 93. *soupe*, milk. *hawkie*, cow.
94. *hallan*, partition.
96. *weel-hain'd kebbuck*, *fell*, well-saved cheese, strong.
99. A year old since flax was in bloom.
105. *lyart haffets*, gray hair upon the temples.
107. *wales*, chooses. 113. *beets*, feeds.
What portions of the Bible are referred to in lines 118 ff.?
138. From Pope's *Windsor Forest*, II, 111–112.
143. *society*. Cf. *Lycidas*, I, 179.
158–159. Cf. Matt. vi. 28–29, and x. 29.
165. Cf. *The Deserted Village*, I, 53.
166. What is the source of the quotation?

Under the influence of what poets was Burns in writing this poem?

In what stanza is the influence of Gray most evident?

What reminders are there in lines 82 ff. of Goldsmith's *When Lovely Woman stoops to Folly;* and of *The Deserted Village*, ll. 325 ff.?

What statement in *The Deserted Village* does that in line 75 resemble? Did Burns mean quite the same thing as Goldsmith did?

Is the Spenserian stanza here employed well adapted to the purpose for which Burns uses it?

By what principle was Burns guided in the use of dialect?

Which are the better parts of the poem — those in the English or those in the Scottish dialect?

What qualities besides sincerity and truthfulness make this a great poem?

To a Mountain Daisy. 3. *stoure*, dust. 21. *bield*, shelter. 23. *histie*, bare.

Compare the first and last stanzas with the corresponding stanzas of *To a Mouse.* Which seem the simpler and more genuine?

What change takes place in the diction used in the last five stanzas?

What lines sound like an apology for the poet's own life?

Compare with this poem Herrick's *To Daffodils.* Which sounds the more spontaneous? Which expresses a deeper feeling?

O, my Luve's like a Red, Red Rose. Burns has here, as often, simply given a new treatment to an old Scottish song. In his day Scotland was rich in many beautiful but imperfect songs, to which Burns has given a final form.

Does this poem 'sing itself'?

What different qualities does Burns mean to suggest by the comparisons in the first stanza?

What is the effect of the repetition in line 9?

Compare this poem with Jonson's *To Celia.* Which is the better love song? Which is the more sincere, musical, passionate?

What is meant by saying of Burns that England has had greater poets, but never a more perfect singer?

Auld Lang Syne. Probably Burns received some aid in composing this poem from the old song usually attributed to Francis Sempill, which was published in 1711. This ballad begins,

Should old acquaintance be forgot
And never thought upon?

It also has the refrain, '*On old long syne.*'

Allan Ramsay has a poem beginning,

Should old acquaintance be forgot
Though they return with scars?

Burns states that he took the song from an old man's singing. It is perhaps the greatest song of friendship ever written.

4. *auld lang syne*, old long ago.

9. *ye'll be your pint-stowp*, pay for your pint mug.

14. *gowans*, daisies. 15. *fit*, foot. 17. *burn*, brook.

18. *dine*, dinner time. 19. *braid*, broad. 21. *fiere*, companion.

23. *guid-willie waught*, good-willed quaff.

What lines best illustrate the 'piercing sweetness' of the poem?

Are there in this song any qualities distinctly Scotch?

Why has the fourth stanza been pronounced the finest in the poem?

John Anderson, my Jo. 1. *jo*, joy or sweetheart. 4. *brent*, smooth. 11. *canty*, cheerful.

Notice how Burns is the poet of the simple, elementary feelings.

What one word, should you say, best describes the spirit of the song?

Does the song gain or lose by its brevity?

What makes this poem almost unique among love songs?

Willie Brew'd a Peck o' Maut. 15. *wyle*, allure. 18. *loun*, rascal.

With these lines compare the beginning of *Tam O'Shanter*.

Which is the best stanza? Give reasons for your choice.

Discuss Arnold's criticism, that 'Burns's world of Scotch drink, Scotch religion, and Scotch manners is often a harsh, a sordid, a repulsive world.' Does Burns's genius here triumph over the vulgarity? If so, how?

Scots, wha hae. 'This battle [at Bannockburn] was the decisive blow which put Robert the First, commonly called Robert de Bruce, in quiet possession of the Scotch throne. It was fought against Edward the Second, son of that Edward who shed so much blood in Scotland in consequence of the dispute between Bruce and Baliol.'—*Burns's note.*

Which is the better national song, this or Thomson's *Rule, Britannia*. Why?

What great French song does it resemble in its power?

Does it contain a greater or a less proportion of distinctly Scottish words than Burns's other songs?

Arnold says Burns's manner has spring, bounding swiftness. How is this manner illustrated here?

What lines in Longfellow's *The Day is Done* characterize Burns?

Should you say that his poems have gained or lost in power and attractiveness through the use of dialect?

Are the endings of his poems especially happy?

Which is the stronger element in his verse, the intellectual or the emotional?

Which of Burns's songs exhibits most of what Arnold calls 'his fiery, reckless energy'?

Which of these songs seems most spontaneous?

What passages are marked by especial tenderness?

Point out passages where Burns has revealed the significance and beauty of the commonplace in nature.

Compare his attitude toward nature with Gray's.

What resemblance exists between his work and Goldsmith's?

In what different ways may we contrast his work with Pope's?

What qualities have made him the national poet of the Scots?

CAROLINA, LADY NAIRNE

The Land o' the Leal, land of the faithful — namely, heaven.

23. *fain*, happy.

How is a remarkable unity of tone secured?

Is the refrain skillfully introduced?

If we did not know the author, to whom should we probably ascribe this song? Why?

Compare this lyric with Burns's *John Anderson, my Jo* in spirit and expression.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Lines, etc. Wordsworth tells us, 'I began it [the poem] upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days with my sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol.'

23–30. Note carefully the thought here expressed, which underlies much of Wordsworth's poetry.

42. *affections*. Possibly means the intuitive perceptions.

45. Wordsworth's mysticism, a rapture in which he came into com-

munion with the Great Life permeating nature, is one of the marked characteristics of his work.

64–65. Compare with lines 23 ff.

106–107. Our world is made up both of our perceptions and the interpretation of those perceptions through our previous experience.

116. Wordsworth here refers to his sister Dorothy, a woman of fine perception and taste, who stimulated and aided her brother in his work.

Note carefully the figures of speech here used. From what sources are they drawn? What is their chief purpose?

Wordsworth has been called rich in 'poetic moments,'— moments of profound insight. Select passages illustrating the truth of this statement.

Study carefully the instances of Wordsworth's ability to express discriminatingly certain very elusive mental states and perceptions.

Discuss the attitude toward nature here shown. Mark the insistence on the relation between nature and man's spiritual life. Point out instances of close observation of small but significant details. Which of Wordsworth's five senses was the strongest? Note his love for the elemental things in nature. How does his attitude toward nature differ from that of any of his predecessors?

She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways. Show how the treatment is admirably in keeping with the subject.

Are the comparisons of the second stanza well chosen? Why?

What line of the poem is deepest fraught with emotion?

The Daffodils, etc. Lines 22–23, which Wordsworth considered the best of the poem, were written by his wife, Mary.

In reading the first line of the poem, should we pause before or after 'lonely'?

What lines in the poem have the best movement?

Which is the poorest line of stanza III?

Note how the last stanza expresses Wordsworth's theory that the basis of poetry is emotion recollected in tranquillity.

With this poem compare Herrick's *To Daffodils*, marking the difference in treatment.

Ode to Duty. This ode was written in 1805. The text here given is that of the edition of 1827.

7. *temptations*, struggles. From these Duty frees us by supplying a fixed principle of action.

12. *the genial sense of youth*, good impulses, as opposed to good principles.

37. *unchartered*, unlimited.

Summarize the chief thoughts of the poem.

What great phrases has Wordsworth here coined?

Compare the mood of which this lyric is the expression with that of Milton's sonnet *On His having arrived at the Age of Twenty-three.*

Compare the thought of the sixth stanza, where nature's obedience to physical law is compared to man's obedience to the moral law, with Psalm xix.

What did Lowell mean by saying that in this ode Wordsworth 'speaks to us out of an ampler ether than in any other of his poems'?

Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood. What is the exact meaning of 'Intimations'? By 'Immortality' does Wordsworth mean eternal duration?

19–50. These lines anticipate the conclusion of the poem.

21. *tabor's sound*, sound of the drum.

23. *A timely utterance*, the poem itself.

28. *the fields of sleep*. What does the poet mean to suggest?

38. *jubilee*. Exact meaning?

51–57. These lines conclude the introduction of the poem, and return to the thought of lines 1–18.

58. An interval of two years elapsed between the writing of stanzas IV and V.

72. *Nature's priest*. In what sense is he a priest?

85. Stanza VII illustrates the preceding one.

86. *pigmy*. Exact meaning? In the edition of 1807 we read 'A four years' darling.' Why this change?

102–105. What reminders are there here of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, II, vii, 139 ff.?

108–128. The key to the understanding of this stanza is the question in lines 123–124.

110. In what sense is the child a *philosopher?*

114. *Prophet*, spokesman.

127. *custom*. Meaning?

129–167. This stanza sets forth the central thought of the poem. The soul's memory of a previous state of existence, and its imperfect adjustment to things temporal, are witnesses to its being part of an eternal order.

143. *Fallings from us, vanishing*, momentary doubts as to the reality of external objects. Wordsworth tells us, 'Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality,' so unsubstantial did the external world sometimes seem to him.

181–186. These lines give the reason for the triumphant tone of the stanza.

202–203. These lines state the result of the meditation of which the poem is the embodiment. Compare the thought with that of Tennyson's *Flower in the crannied wall.*

Do children commonly feel this nearness to nature?

Into what groups of stanzas may the poem be divided?

An ode has been defined as 'any strain of enthusiastic and exalted lyrical verse, directed to a fixed purpose, and dealing progressively with one dignified theme.' Show that this ode corresponds with the definition.

What is the prevailing meter, and what variations do you observe?

What is the rhyme scheme?

What should you say of the rhyme in lines 42 and 45?

What of the phrasing in lines 133–134? Point out other examples of good phrasing.

Which do you regard as the finest stanza?

Which stanza shows the keenest joy in nature?

To the work of what earlier poet may this ode be compared in the dignity of its thought and in the sonorousness of its expression?

Matthew Arnold, commenting upon this poem, says, 'The idea of the high instincts and affections coming out in childhood, testifying of a divine home, recently left, and fading away as our life proceeds, — this idea, of undeniable beauty as a play of fancy, has itself not the character of poetic truth of the best kind; it has no real solidity.' Is this criticism just?

What justification is there for Emerson's statement that this poem is 'the high water mark of English thought in the nineteenth century'?

London. 3. *altar, sword, and pen.* For what do these words stand?

6. *inward happiness*, due to the adjustment he prays for in the *Ode to Duty*, and to the sense of kinship with nature which he laments the

lack of in the other sonnet beginning 'The world is too much with us.'

11. What do 'pure' and 'majestic' modify?

In what sense could Milton's soul be said to be like a star? Cf. Shelley's *Sonnet to Wordsworth*, l. 9,

Thou wert as a lone star whose light did shine.

Justify the characterization of Milton's style in line 10.

Was there any foundation in the age of Wordsworth for the severe criticism expressed in this sonnet?

The World is too much with Us. Wordsworth is the first really great sonnet writer after Milton. Discontented with the sordid materialism of modern life, which tends to destroy the sense of the mystic relation between the world without us and the world within, Wordsworth here turns with longing to the Greek lover of nature — a love that led the Greeks to personify its forces.

13. *Proteus.* What is the meaning and derivation of '*Protean*'?

14. *Triton.* See *Lycidas*, ll. 89–90 and note.

'Nine tenths of my verses,' said Wordsworth, 'have been murmured out in the open air.' Does this sonnet sound as if composed out of doors?

Compare this poem with Shakespeare's *Sonnet XXIX*. Which is the expression of more thoughtful feeling? Is the emotion of Wordsworth's sonnet 'intellectualized emotion' as distinguished from pure feeling?

What gives the poem dignity and permanence, even though it be but the expression of a transient mood?

SIR WALTER SCOTT

The Battle of Bannockburn. The student may be interested in seeing to what extent the account of the battle is historical. See Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, First Series, Vol. I, Chap. VIII.

9. *battles.* Meaning? 64. *selle*, saddle.

66. Who were the Plantagenets?

200–217. What suggestions may Scott have taken from Burns's *Scots, wha hae?*

Are the Scottish troops represented as coming from one particular part of their kingdom?

How are we prepared for the outcome of the battle?

What details are the most vivid and characteristic in the description of the Scottish army?

How does the poet show that his sympathies are with the Scotch? Is he unfair in his treatment of the English?

What customs of chivalry are introduced? How do they affect our appreciation of the poem?

From what sources does Scott draw his comparisons? Does he use comparatively few, or many figures?

Compare Scott's description of a battle with Drayton's; with Campbell's; with Macaulay's. Which is the most detailed? Which has the most action? Which has the most of the poet's own thought?

Scott himself said of his poetry, 'I am sensible that if there is anything good about my poetry . . . it is a hurried frankness of composition which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active disposition.' What does Scott mean by this frankness, and how is it illustrated in this selection?

What is meant by saying that Scott is the most Homeric of British poets?

Jock of Hazeldean. The first stanza of this poem is taken from an old Scotch ballad called 'Jock of Hazel Green.' What other poet has borrowed freely from Scotch folk-songs?

'The definition of Scott's poetry,' says Hazlitt, 'is a pleasing superficiality.' Is this an adequate definition of it?

Should you call it poetry of action or poetry of thought?

Why have so many such songs come from the border country?

What characteristics of the old ballad has Scott succeeded in reproducing in this poem?

Why has it so often been set to music?

Lochinvar. This poem, Scott tells us, is founded 'in a very slight degree' on one called 'Katherine Janfarie,' which may be found in the *Border Minstrelsy*.

20. *Solway*. An interesting account of the spring tides in Solway Frith may be found in Scott's novel, *Redgauntlet* (Chapter IV).

32. *galliard*, a gay dance. 41. *scaur*, steep river bank.

Describe the meter and point out its appropriateness for this story, particularly in ll. 37–45.

In what different ways is the impression of vigor attained?

Border Song. 11. *hirsels*, flocks.

Of what mood is this lyric the expression?

To what feelings does Scott appeal? Are these feelings simple and elemental?

Point out how the song illustrates the peculiar skill with which Scott employs proper names — 'a rarely misleading sign,' says one critic, 'of true poetical genius.'

Compare the lyric with Burns's *Scots, wha hae*. Which appeals to nobler emotions? Which is the more stirring?

Note the justness of a contemporary criticism upon Scott's verse that it 'is not to be sung or danced — it is to be jumped.'

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

France: An Ode. 3–4. With this compare Byron's apostrophe to the ocean in *Childe Harold*, IV, clxxix ff. Which poet shows a greater love for the sea?

27. *slavish band*, the English conservatives, whom Coleridge regarded as bondmen to established institutions.

43. Coleridge at this time felt that the excesses of the Revolution, with the accompanying atheism, were but the natural reaction after the oppression of state and church.

66 ff. These lines refer to the subjugation of the Swiss republic by the sister republic of France. This act, possibly more than any other, helped to change Coleridge's attitude toward the Revolution.

95. *Priestcraft's harpy minions.* Explain.

Why, in the first stanza, does Coleridge appeal to the clouds, the waves, and the woods?

Is such a theme, one of contemporary interest, likely to prolong or to limit the life of the poem?

Study carefully the splendid movement and climax of stanza 1.

Point out in the succeeding stanzas instances of good management of the pauses.

Are there any changes in the rapidity of movement through the ode?

Do you note any lines that seem rhetorical?

Which do you consider the finest stanza of the poem, and why?

Hymn before Sunrise, in the Vale of Chamouni. 'Beside the rivers Arve and Arveiron, which have their source at the foot of Mont Blanc,

five conspicuous torrents rush down its sides; and within a few paces of the glaciers the *Gentiana Major* grows in immense numbers, with "its flowers of loveliest blue." ' — *Coleridge's note.*

83. *Hierarch.* Meaning? Is the word well chosen? By what other designations does Coleridge refer to the mountain?

What idea is emphasized at the close of each of the last three stanzas?

Are the different portions of the poem skillfully connected?

How does Coleridge secure in this poem a vigor of description?

With this poem compare Byron's *Mont Blanc.* How does Coleridge's delight in the mountain differ from Byron's? Which poet is the more mystical? Which poem shows the finer phrasing?

Compare the movement with that in *France.* Which movement seems the finer and why? Which is the more suited to the subject-matter? Which do you consider the greater poem and why?

Kubla Khan. When the poem was first published, in 1816, the title read *Kubla Khan, or a Vision in a Dream.*

Before falling into the sleep during which the poem took shape, Coleridge had been reading the following lines from *Purchas, His Pilgrimage:* 'In Xamdu did Cublai Can build a stately Palace, encompassing sixteene miles of plaine ground with a wall, wherin are fertile Meddowes, pleasant Springs, delightful Streames, and all sorts of beasts of chase and game, and in the middest thereof a sumptuous house for pleasure.' — *Campbell's note.*

What is the effect of the change of meter in the first section?

How has Coleridge succeeded in accelerating and lightening the effect of the iambic lines?

Study the combination of vowels and consonants, noting the fine use of alliteration and assonance. Are any lines made intentionally harsh?

Note carefully how well the comparisons selected (*e.g.* 15–16) serve to give a certain tone to the poem.

What is the effect of the recurrence of several phrases repeated, either exactly or with slight variation?

CHARLES LAMB

Sonnet XI. This sonnet gives graceful expression to the regret with which thoughtful men look back upon their lost youth. It affords an interesting comparison with Vaughan's *Retreat*, with Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality*, and with Hood's *I remember, I remember.*

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Rose Aylmer. With which of Wordsworth's poems may this be compared in its restraint? In which is the grief expressed the greater?

THOMAS CAMPBELL

Hohenlinden. During a visit to the Continent, Campbell witnessed, on Dec. 3, 1800, from a Bavarian monastery, the battle between the French and Austrians. This poem has been said to be 'the only representation of a modern battle that possesses either interest or sublimity.'

1. *Linden*, Hohenlinden.

4. *Iser*. The battle was fought on a plateau between the Iser and the Inn. 27. *Munich*. Why mentioned?

29–32. The Austrians lost 8000 men; the French, 5000.

Was Sir Walter Scott justified in calling this 'a glorious little lyric'?

Point out the sudden changes of mood in the poem. Contrast it in this respect with Drayton's *To the Cambro-Britons and their Harp, his Ballad of Agincourt*.

In what way by the last line of each stanza is the whole poem bound together?

THOMAS MOORE

Oft in the Stilly Night. What is the reason for the popularity of this poem? Is it deservedly greater or less than that of *'Tis the last Rose of Summer* by the same author?

What musical instrument does the melody of this poem suggest?

Does any comparison in the lyric seem affected or insincere?

Which of the two stanzas is the better?

Contrast the spirit of these graceful, sentimental lines with that of Lamb's *The Old Familiar Faces*. Which shows the deeper feeling?

LEIGH HUNT

Abou Ben Adhem. 14. *Write me*, etc. This line appropriately serves as Hunt's epitaph on the monument erected by popular subscription in Kensal Green Cemetery.

Why did Hunt choose an Oriental name for the hero of this parable?

Why is the word 'angel' (l. 5) changed (ll. 7 and 8)?

Compare the teaching of this parable with that of the parable recorded in Luke, xvi. 19-25.

GEORGE NOEL GORDON, LORD BYRON

Vision of Belshazzar. Point out how Byron has compressed the narrative contained in the fifth chapter of Daniel.

What details has he seized upon and what has he omitted?

What qualities other than conciseness are found in this poem?

What should you say of the diction? Are there many monosyllables? Why?

The Destruction of Sennacherib. This poem, among others, was written at the request of Byron's friend, Douglas Kinnaird, for a *Selection of Hebrew Melodies* published in 1815. The biblical account of the incident treated in the poem will be found in Isaiah xxxvii. 36 ff.

2. *cohorts*. What is the effect of using this word?

21. *Ashur*, Assyria.

22. *Baal*, the Phœnician sun-god, worshiped by the Assyrians under the name Bel or Belus.

Mark the energy and the compression of the style.

What is the meter of the poem?

Note its appropriateness to the bounding movement suggested by the first four lines.

Point out the beauty and fitness of the two similes in lines 5–8.

May Byron have owed the suggestion for the second to Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I, 302–303?

In line 18 Byron first wrote

With the crow on his breast, and the rust on his mail.

Why did he change it?

Notice the words with which the different lines begin. Are they strong words?

Compare this poem with the preceding one in respect to beauty and strength of movement. What qualities have made this one of the best known of Byron's poems?

The Isles of Greece. Byron wrote this poem three years before his death, and two years before he sailed to aid the Greeks in their struggle for independence.

2. Who was Sappho?

4. *Delos rose*. See Spenser, *Faerie Queen*, II, XII, 13.

7. *Scian and the Teian muse*. Homer and Anacreon.

12. *Islands of the Blest*, legendary islands in the far Atlantic, whither the souls of the blest went after death. 19. *A king*, Xerxes.

54. *Bacchanal.* Meaning? 55. *Pyrrhic dance*, a martial dance.
59. *Cadmus.* Said to have introduced the alphabet from Egypt.
78. *Heracleidan*, Greek. 80. *a king*, etc., Louis XVIII of France.

What emotion is expressed in this lyric? Does it sound sincere? Explain the historical allusions. Why are Marathon, Salamis, and Thermopylæ mentioned?

What are the elements in this lyric that contribute to the effect of splendid energy? Are the rhymes masculine or feminine?

What aspects of nature do you imagine appealed to Byron?

The Prisoner of Chillon. This poem was composed in two days. It was inspired by a visit that Byron, in company with Shelley, paid to the castle of Chillon on the shore of Lake Geneva in Switzerland. Here one François Bonivard was kept as a political prisoner for six years. The hero of the poem, however, is wholly a creation of Byron's own imagination and not an historical figure.

2–3. What is the effect of the variations from the regular rhythm in these lines and in 227–228, and 343?

57. *pure elements of the earth.* What is meant?

211. Notice the tragic pathos of this line. It is the emotional climax of the poem.

Contrast the movement of this poem with that of Coleridge's *France*. Which is the more melodious? Which is the more vigorous?

Why is there so little imagery? Are the figures expanded or condensed? What purpose do they serve?

Do any lines impress you as prosaic?

Characterize the imagination here shown. Compare it with Shelley's.

The poem aims to portray an emotional development. Trace the progress of Bonivard's emotional experience. Why are the two brothers introduced? How is Bonivard recalled from his despair to an interest in life? Compare with Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, ll. 272 ff. and 359. Does the psychology of the poem seem true?

Can you name any other of Byron's poems that exemplify his dominant characteristics, — his love for liberty, and his 'feeling for human suffering'? Do any passages seem declamatory?

In what different ways does his work produce the impression of strength? Sir Walter Scott thought this poem 'more powerful than pleasing.' What did he mean, and is the criticism a just one?

As compared with Scott, has Byron more or less passion, splendor, imagination?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Ode to the West Wind. 'This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when the tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors that pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset with a violent tempest of hail and rain attended with that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions.' — *Shelley's note.*

2. Would anything be lost by changing the order of the last two words?

11. What is the effect of the parenthesis on the movement of the verse?

What line in stanza III moves most smoothly? Why?

43–45. How do these lines summarize the three preceding stanzas? What new element is here introduced?

56. Do you imagine this characterization of the poet's self a good one?

70. With what inflection of the voice should this line be read?

Study Shelley's wonderful variety in the use of the pause throughout the poem.

With what poems previously studied may we compare the *Ode* in emotional fervor?

To a Skylark. 15. *unbodied.* Some editions read *embodied.* Which is the better reading, and why?

21. Note all the different qualities of the bird's song expressed either directly, *e.g.* 'keen', or indirectly by suggestion.

22. Does Shelley here mean the sun or the moon?

36 ff. Study carefully the four comparisons. Which is the most beautiful poetically? Why has the poet arranged them in just this order?

39–40. The regeneration of mankind was a favorite idea with Shelley.

86. What word should be accented in reading this line?

90. Poe says, 'Let me remind you that (how we know not) this certain taint of sadness is inseparably connected with all the highest manifestations of beauty.' Are Poe and Shelley right in their belief?

What does the skylark symbolize to Shelley?

What resemblance between the close of this poem and that of the *Ode to the West Wind?*

With this poem compare Wordsworth's strikingly different treatment of the same subject.

Adonais. Shelley here laments the death of Keats, which he, accept-

ing the belief common at that time, ascribes to a cruel review by Gifford in the *Quarterly*.

Why did Shelley select the name *Adonais?*

12. *Urania*. Who was she? For the significance of the name see *Paradise Lost*, VII, 1–20.

11. See Psalm xci. 6.

30. Milton, 'the sire of an immortal strain,' is here represented as third with Homer and Vergil among the 'sons of light.'

44. *some*, Byron and Shelley.

47. *nursling of her widowhood.* Possibly this means that Urania mourned for him as a widowed mother might such a child.

63. *liquid.* Meaning?

64–72. What adjective in this stanza is best chosen?

100. *Splendor*. Meaning?

116. How is the movement of this line retarded?

117. With this fine figure compare *Paradise Lost*, XII, 628–632.

155. Compare with Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, CXV.

169. With this idea compare Lowell's

> *Every clod feels a stir of might,*
> *An instinct within it that reaches and towers,*
> *And, groping blindly above it for light,*
> *Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers.*

172. Explain the line.

172–189. What is the relation between the two stanzas?

186. *who lends, etc.* Death lends the means of perpetuating life.

238. *unpastured dragon*, the critic who attacked Keats.

250. *The Pythian of the age*, Byron, who, in his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, replied to the savage attacks of the *Quarterly*.

264. *The Pilgrim of Eternity* is Byron. The 'sweetest lyrist' of Ierne, or Ireland, is Moore.

281–306. Compare Shelley's characterization of himself here with that in the *Skylark*, and that in the *Ode to the West Wind.*

307 ff. Leigh Hunt, who was a friend of Keats in London.

343. The beginning of the second part of the poem. What is the effect in this line of the monosyllables?

370. Where is a similar idea expressed in *Lycidas?* Compare Shelley's conception of the Deity with that expressed by Wordsworth in the *Lines composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey*.

399 ff. Why should these particular poets be chosen?

424. With this compare Byron's *Childe Harold*, IV, LXXVIII ff.

459. Three months after writing this poem Shelley was drowned.

485. *celestial fire.* Meaning?

What is the metrical form of the poem? Is it appropriate? Would the elegiac stanza have been better?

What phrases serve as a refrain?

What lines describe well the nature of Shelley's own poems?

What phrases recall similar ones in the *Ode to a Nightingale?*

What can you gather from the poem of Shelley's religious belief?

Compare *Lycidas* and *Adonais.* In which is the grief more personal? In which does the poet make proportionately the more frequent reference to himself? Which poem better characterizes the one lamented? In which is the moral indignation the greater? In which are the transitions the more skillful? Point out the many phrases in *Adonais*, as in line 10, that are echoes of *Lycidas*. Compare the two flower passages. What qualities are emphasized in each picture? Milton's dirge begins quietly, swells in its grief and moral indignation; then, bringing in the note of hope, subsides and ends in a peaceful strain. Trace the emotional changes in *Adonais.*

In addition to the study here suggested, interesting comparisons may be made with Arnold's *Thyrsis*, with Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, and with Emerson's *Threnody.*

A Lament. Is Shelley here master of his emotion or mastered by it? What lines in the *Skylark* are here recalled?

What in nature and in human life appealed to Shelley?

What is the source of Shelley's metaphors?

Where does he aim to render the effect rather than the thing itself?

Shelley has been called the poet of revolt. Cite some passage in support of this criticism.

Swinburne calls Shelley 'a perfect singing god.' Why?

Is it true, as Professor Courthope says, that Wordsworth speaks the language of philosophers; Shelley, of spirits; but Byron, of men?

JOHN KEATS

The **Ode to a Nightingale** was written in 1819, about three months after the death of Keats's brother Thomas by consumption, a disease of which the poet was destined to die two years later.

16. *Hippocrene.* Meaning?

In which line in stanza II does the movement seem to you the best?

20–21. What use of echo words, a favorite device with Keats, is here illustrated? What other lines exemplify its use?

23, 27, 62. What significance is added to these lines by a knowledge of the poet's life?

43. Is *embalmèd* a well-chosen adjective? 51. *darkling.* Meaning?

61. What is the emphatic word in this line?

Stanza VII. This stanza suggests more than is expressed directly.

Can you form a definite mental picture from the last two lines? If not, what is their purpose? 67. *alien corn.* Explain.

What does the bird typify to the poet?

What would have been gained or lost by making the scene more definite?

Keats said that he looked on a fine phrase as a lover on his beloved. Point out the fine phrases in this poem.

Which do you consider the most beautiful stanza? Defend your choice.

Ode on a Grecian Urn. Why should Keats call this poem an ode?

1–2. What is the effect of the alliteration in these lines?

5–10. What is the purpose of casting this description into the question form?

7. *Tempe* and *Arcady.* Why are these special names chosen?

11. What justification is there for Keats's making this statement? With this compare Wordsworth's *Yarrow Unvisited:*—

> *For when we're there, although 'tis fair,*
> *'Twill be another Yarrow.*

27–30. What lines of Shelley's *Skylark* are here recalled?

41. *Attic shape.* Meaning? *brede.* One of numerous illustrations of Keats's freedom in spelling.

44. *tease.* What is the suggestion of this word?

Compare this poem with the *Ode to a Nightingale.* Which of the two poems impresses you as the more compact? Which is the more harmonious? Which do you like the better, and why?

La Belle Dame sans Merci. What effect has the poet wished to produce in this poem, and what means has he employed for securing it? How does the structure of the poem add to this effect?

With the reading of lines 29–32 compare that of another edition, —

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

Which reading do you prefer, and why?

On first looking into Chapman's Homer. Explain the first four lines.

6. What words in this line are especially suggestive, and why?

11. Does Keats's error in ascribing the discovery of the Pacific to Cortez materially affect the worth of this sonnet?

Why is the close of the sonnet especially effective?

The Eve of St. Agnes. When is the eve of St. Agnes? What is the legend concerning her?

Why should this special time and name have been selected for the poem?

15. *rails.* Meaning? 37. Is *argent* here a suggestive adjective?

70. *amort.* Meaning?

133. Is *brook* ordinarily used in the sense in which it is here?

155–156. *churchyard thing: passing bell.* Meaning?

171. *Merlin paid his debt.* What is the allusion? See Tennyson's *Merlin and Vivien.*

188. *amain.* Meaning? 193. *mission'd*, divinely sent.

218. *gules.* Meaning? 237. Is *poppied* here an appropriate epithet?

241. Explain this line.

253–261. Note carefully the different sensuous appeals of this stanza.

Could stanzas XXX–XXXI be omitted without materially affecting the poem?

277. *Eremite.* Meaning?

292. *La belle Dame sans Merci* was a poem written in the early part of the fifteenth century by Alain Chartier.

What is the stanzaic form, and is it especially effective?

How do the opening lines suggest the tone of the entire poem?

Are the names of the characters well selected?

Study Keats's wonderful use of words. What old words are revived? Does he coin any new ones? What common ones has he made fresh and striking?

Discuss the criticism sometimes made that the poem should end with line 371.

What allusions in the earlier part prepare us for the close of the poem?

Discuss the statement that 'the Eve of St. Agnes appeals too strongly to the senses, and is so lacking in spirituality that it cannot be considered poetry of the highest order.'

Should you say that Keats's work is characterized by strength?

In what different ways do these poems show his sensitiveness to beauty?

To what other poet we have studied does Keats seem most similar in disposition? To what poet, most dissimilar?

Compare Keats's attitude toward the great questions of life with Shelley's.

Which of these two poets seems to possess the greater delicacy of touch?

Can you see any reasons why so many nineteenth-century poets took Keats as their model?

THOMAS HOOD

I Remember, I Remember. Comparing Vaughan's *Retreat*, Lamb's *Sonnet XI*, Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality*, etc., with this poem, which should you say showed most sympathy with the heart of childhood? Which is simplest, noblest? Which is most philosophical? Which is most pathetic?

What do you regard as the finest phrase in this poem?

Poe says of the author, 'One of the noblest — and speaking of Fancy — one of the most fanciful of modern poets, was Thomas Hood.' Does the poem go far to justify such an estimate? How?

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

The Battle of Naseby. 1–6. For an explanation of the imagery read Isaiah, lxiii. 1–6.

9. *day in June*, June 14, 1645. 11. *Man of Blood*, Charles I.

12. Sir Marmaduke Langdale commanded the left wing of the Royalist army; Prince Rupert, the German nephew of the king, the right.

14. *The General*, Fairfax.

22. *Alsatia*. For a description of this notorious district of London, see *Century Dictionary*, or Scott's *Fortunes of Nigel*, Chap. XVI.

29. Prince Rupert forced back the left of the Parliamentary army. Cromwell, however, had been equally successful against the Royalist

left. Cromwell now swung round against the rear of the Royalist center.

38. *Temple Bar*, a famous gateway before the Temple in London, now replaced by the Temple Bar Memorial.

46. *lemans*, sweethearts, paramours.

57. *she of the Seven Hills*, the church of Rome. See Rev. xvii. 9.

60. *Houses*, of Parliament.

In a war ballad a stirring incident should be shown clearly from one point of view, and there should be action in every line. Does this poem meet these requirements?

What characteristics of the Puritans are here emphasized?

Point out where Macaulay carefully explains his allusions. Why?

Whence are the similes taken?

What is the effect of the internal rhyme, lines 3 and 7; and of the feminine rhyme in line 43?

Show that Mrs. Browning might have had this poem distinctly in mind when she spoke of 'the noble, clear, metallic note' in Macaulay's poetry.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

Lead Kindly Light. Cardinal Newman wrote this hymn on a journey from Palermo to Marseilles, while the boat lay for a week becalmed in the Straits of Bonifacio. His attitude of mind when he wrote the hymn is given in the *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, pp. 94–100.

4. *Lead Thou me on.* In the *Apologia* (p. 214) he says that for years he had the conviction 'that my mind had not found its ultimate rest, and that in some sense or other I was on a journey.'

17–18. The exact meaning of these two lines has been much discussed. The author himself (in a letter reprinted in *Notes and Queries* for March 20, 1880) refused to attempt an explanation. Four differing interpretations are offered (in *Notes and Queries* for April 3, May 8, June 12, August 7 of that year).

What qualities common to this hymn and to *Jesus, Lover of my Soul* insure the immortality of both?

In line 11 some editors have changed the reading to 'I loved day's dazzling light.' Discuss the effect of the alteration.

Line 15 has been changed to

'*Through dreary doubts, through pain and sorrow, till.*'

Show that this is to change poetry to prose.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

Sonnets from the Portuguese. The forty-four sonnets composing this sequence record the growth of the love of Elizabeth Barrett for Robert Browning. The name she gave the series was suggested by her husband's calling her his little Portuguese, and was intended to veil somewhat the autobiographic nature of the poems.

XXII. Study the management of the pauses.

Is the thought ever obscure?

XLII. What qualities entitle this to rank as one of the greatest sonnets in English?

What word serves as a keynote?

A Musical Instrument. Is the metrical form here employed happily selected?

Why is the rhyme order a good one?

What phrases serve as a refrain?

Express in your own words the thought as summarized in the last stanza. Is it true?

Is there a distinctly feminine note in these poems of Mrs. Browning's?

ROBERT BROWNING

Prospice. 7. Of what is "the Arch Fear" a personification?

11. *guerdon.* Meaning?

15. *bandaged my eyes.* What kind of death has Browning in mind?

19. *life's arrears.* What man must pay at death.

Under what different symbols has Browning here represented death; and how is his choice significant? With these symbols contrast those which Tennyson selects in *Crossing the Bar*, p. 342.

Compare Browning's attitude toward death with that suggested by the closing petition of the litany of the Anglican church, 'from battle and murder, and from sudden death, good Lord, deliver us.'

Study carefully Browning's self-characterization. To what view of life was he opposed?

With the conception of happiness in the future life here expressed, compare that of Newman as shown in the last stanza of *Lead, Kindly Light*, p. 281, and in Mrs. Browning's *Sonnet XLIII*, p. 282.

Incident of the French Camp. Note carefully the skillful manner in which Browning quickly gives the setting of the story.

Why is the close of the poem especially effective?

Do you admire Napoleon more or less than you did before reading this incident?

My Last Duchess. 3. *Now.* What gesture is implied?

6. *Fra Pandolph* and *Claus of Innsbruck* (56) are imaginary personages.

Note the management of pauses, *e.g.* 16–17, and the unexpected rhymes.

47. *As if alive.* Returning to what previous phrase?

53. *Nay, etc.* What action is here suggested, and why? Compare with the close of *Hamlet*, I, v.

To whom is the Duke speaking, and under what circumstances?

What are the advantages, and what the disadvantages, of casting the poem in the form of a dramatic monologue? Would it probably have been clearer and stronger if put in dialogue form?

Of which character, the Duke or his Duchess, do we learn the more? Do any phrases summarize either of these characters? Of what things is he proud? Is he selfish? What is his complaint against his former wife? What does he intimate that he shall expect of his new wife? In judging the character of the Duchess, we must remember that we see her only through her husband's eyes.

'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came.' What is the meaning of "Childe"?

Note carefully the different ways in which extreme weariness is brought out in the beginning of the poem.

22. *obstreperous.* Meaning?

55 ff. How does the speaker's mental attitude as symbolized in this stanza differ from that at the beginning of the poem? Where do we find the next change in surroundings, and how do they differ from the scene here portrayed?

91. *Cuthbert* and *Giles* (97) are members of an imaginary band.

91–102. What is the purpose of these two stanzas?

Tell the story of the poem. What different means are employed for giving us the setting and the story of the quest? What do you think the *Dark Tower* symbolizes?

Discuss Browning's diction in this poem. What unusual words has he here employed? Point out some animated, unpoetic, and grotesque words.

What passages show the greatest vigor? Select lines marked by delicacy of touch.

What verse form is here used? Why is it a better form for such a poem than blank verse would be?

In what sense may we say that the knight has gained a victory, whatever may be the outcome of the conflict?

Andrea del Sarto. 29. *my everybody's moon.* Because Andrea's wife sat as his model for his Madonnas.

93. *Morello's*, the highest of the spurs of the Apennines to the north of Florence. — *Corson's note.*

105. *The Urbinate*, Raphael.

106. *Vasari*, Giorgio Vasari, a pupil of Andrea del Sarto.

120. What interruption of the monologue occurs here? What at 220?

130. *Agnolo*, Michael Angelo. Who was he?

146. *For fear, etc.* Why was he afraid?

150. *Fontainebleau.* The famous palace thirty-seven miles from Paris, built by Francis I, who employed Andrea del Sarto to decorate it.

263. *Leonard*, Leonardo da Vinci. What is his most famous picture? Read Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters*, translated by Mrs. Jonathan Foster, London, 1850, Vol. III, pp. 204–207, and show how Browning has painted a subjective portrait from the suggestions furnished by Vasari.

What is the difference between a monologue and a soliloquy such as we have in *A Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister?* Which is the more dramatic?

How do the first lines strike the keynote for the whole monologue? What other lines (*e.g.* 35) suggest the setting and also the emotional atmosphere of the poem?

What ethical idea is at the basis of the monologue?

Does Andrea appeal more or less to our sympathies because he realizes his failure? By what particular weakness is that failure caused?

Which is the more vividly revealed — the speaker in *Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister* or Andrea del Sarto?

Judging from this monologue, what should you say were Browning's ideals of art? Note especially line 97. An interesting comparison may be made with Ruskin's views, as stated in *Queen of the Air*, ¶ 106.

How is Browning's buoyant optimism shown in this 'twilight piece'?

Hervé Riel. This poem appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* for March, 1871. The £100 that Browning received for it, he contributed to the

fund then being raised to buy food for the people of Paris after the siege by the Germans in 1870–1871. The facts narrated in the story are historical except in one particular. Instead of asking for a single holiday, Hervé Riel requested a complete release from naval service.

5. *Rance*, the river Rance.

21. St. Malo is famous for its high tides. Ordinary tides rise from twenty-three to twenty-eight feet; and spring tides forty-eight feet above low-water mark.

30. *Plymouth Sound.* Why mentioned? How far away?

43. *Tourville*, the French admiral.

44. *Croisickese*, native of St. Croisic.

46. *Maluins*, dwellers in St. Malo.

49. *Grève*, the 'strand,' sandy shore. *disembogues*. Meaning?

92. *rampired Solidor*, a feudal fort, now used as barracks.

120. *but a run*, the distance is about a hundred miles.

124. *Belle Aurore*, beautiful dawn.

129. *head*, figurehead. — *Rolfe's note.*

How is Browning's interest in dramatic crises of character development illustrated here?

What devices does Browning employ for capturing and holding the reader's interest? Does he make use of suspense? surprise? Are there vivid contrasts of emotional tone?

How does the poem illustrate Browning's limitations as a dramatic poet? Do the words of any of the speakers seem inappropriate to men in their station? Do they often employ the inverted order of words? Are they too fluent?

How is the spirited effect of the poem produced? Is the narrative rapid? condensed?

Browning's verse is said to have a tonic effect, like that of wind and sun. Notice the frank and manly tone of the poem.

Which are the most ringing lines?

Show that Browning regarded little else besides the human soul as worth study, and that poetry, in the sense of verbal music, was to him only a subordinate aim.

Was he more interested in tracing the development of character, or in revealing, through action at crucial moments, character already formed?

Which one of Browning's poems studied contains the noblest basic idea?

To what is the obscurity of Browning's poetry chiefly due? Is it due mainly to the fact that he presents only dramatic crises of character, to the condensation of the expression, to the ruggedness of the verse, or to the monologue form in which the poems are frequently cast?

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

Where lies the Land? How is a notable unity of form and tone here secured?

Say not the Struggle Nought Availeth. Compare the thought with that of Longfellow's *A Psalm of Life*.

Are there any slight imperfections in the poem?

What are the resemblances and what the differences between the thought of this poem and that of the former? Which has the more pronounced melody?

Should you call these poems 'pagan'?

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Shakespeare. Has Arnold here emphasized the qualities we commonly associate with Shakespeare?

Should you imagine Arnold would choose Shakespeare as his ideal man?

With this sonnet contrast that by Longfellow on Shakespeare.

Dover Beach. 14. This suggests what line in Shelley's *Skylark?*

15–20. *Sophocles. Antigone*, ll. 582 ff. 'Happy are those whose life tastes not of trouble. To all whose home is shaken by the gods, for them no kind of curse is wanting, as it creeps on from generation to generation; even as when the swell comes coursing o'er the darkling deep, sped by storm blasts, that blow across the sea from Thrace, it rolls the swart sand from the depths, and the bluff headlands moan and roar in the storm.' — *Coleridge's translation.*

What is the setting (time, place, and surroundings) of this poem?

Into what two parts does the poem naturally divide itself? Indicate the relation of the different stanzas.

Point out lines where the movement is especially fine.

Look up in some history of English literature Arnold's relation to the religious thought of his time. Show how this poem is a typical expression of his belief.

Self-dependence. What is the effect of the change of meter in the last stanza?

What is the danger of the doctrine here advanced? What poems by Hunt and Coleridge teach that man's greatest happiness comes from serving his fellow-men?

With this poem compare Wordsworth's description of Milton in the sonnet *London, 1802*.

Does the intellectual element in Arnold's verse ever overshadow the emotional?

Show how these different poems by Arnold illustrate this belief, that 'The secret of life is joy, not peace.'

What notable difference in spirit is apparent in these poems of Arnold as compared with those of Clough?

GABRIEL CHARLES DANTE ROSSETTI

The Blessed Damozel. This poem was written when Rossetti was in his nineteenth year. The first version appeared in 1847, in the *Germ*, a small magazine published by the band of which Rossetti was the leader. Mr. Hall Caine reports Rossetti as saying, 'I saw that Poe had done the utmost it was possible to do with the grief of the lover on earth, so I determined to reverse the conditions, and give utterance to the groanings of the loved one in heaven.'

1. *Blessed, damozel.* In what sense is each of these words employed?

19. What is the purpose of these interjected lines? Who is the speaker?

54. This line may have been suggested by that in Job xxxviii. 7, 'When the morning stars sang together.'

86. *Tree.* This is probably a symbol of immortal life.

126. *citherns and citoles.* Meaning?

Compare this poem with Poe's *Raven*. Which expresses the deeper grief? Which is the more musical?

Point out the mediæval elements in the poem.

What details carry a symbolic meaning?

What are the most daring conceptions in the poem?

What striking figures are here employed?

How is the loneliness of the Blessed Damozel emphasized?

Do you feel that the lovers are destined ever to meet?

My Sister's Sleep. This poem is in many respects most typical of the Pre-Raphaelite methods.

What poem of Tennyson's published about the same time employed and made famous this meter?

Where in this poem has Rossetti shown fine management of pauses? Do any lines move haltingly?

Has the poem gained or lost by its simplicity and marked concreteness? Is there any apparent straining after effect?

Silent Noon. 8. *visible silence.* What phrase does this suggest from *My Sister's Sleep?* Compare this phrase with Milton's 'darkness visible' in *Paradise Lost*, I, 63.

How does this differ in form from the Shakespearian and from the Miltonic sonnet?

Show how each detail introduced contributes to the effect Rossetti wished to produce.

Does any phrase summarize the spirit of the description?

Lost Days. Point out the resemblances and the differences in structure between this and the preceding sonnet. Which has the more rapid movement?

Does the sonnet appeal to you as a genuine confession of the writer's feelings? Compare the remorse here expressed with that in Byron's *On this Day I complete My Thirty-sixth Year.* Which is the more sincerely impassioned?

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Atalanta in Calydon. This is the first chorus in *Atalanta in Calydon*, a play written in the spirit of the old Greek dramas. It is sung in honor of Artemis by a chorus of Greek virgins.

2. *The mother of months.* Which month is meant?

6. *Is half assuaged for Itylus.* Cf. *Il Penseroso*, ll. 56–57. Retell the story of Philomela.

9. *Come with bows bent, etc.* Who was Artemis?

41. *Pan by noon and Bacchus by night.* Why are these mentioned?

44. *The Mænad and the Bassarid.* Who are referred to?

How is the poet's mastery of all the resources of verbal music here shown? Point out some of the most melodious lines. Is the music sensuous? What of the appeal to the sense of color?

Point out the composite and intricate nature of the rhythm. Instance anapestic, dactylic, and iambic lines.

Are there traces of the fatal fluency for which Matthew Arnold blamed Swinburne, affirming that Swinburne used a hundred words where one would have sufficed?

The Salt of the Earth. This poem, offering a remarkable contrast in many ways to the *Chorus* from *Atalanta*, is typical of one great class of Swinburne's work.

How does this lyric gain unity and force from the sentence structure?

Compare the attitude towards childhood here expressed with that shown in some of the poems already studied.

ALFRED TENNYSON

Mariana. 8. *grange*. Meaning?

31. Cf. *Lycidas*, l. 187.

74. Cf. *Il Penseroso*, ll. 78–82. Notice that in both instances the slight sound serves to accentuate the stillness.

Compare with this poem *Mariana in the South*, its sequel. Which, by portraying her surroundings colored by her own emotions, reveals more indirectly Mariana's feelings?

Which is the more effective — the direct or the indirect method?

Point out in detail how objects and sounds are selected and grouped so as to suggest and emphasize the single idea of loneliness.

Compare the use of nature to reflect human moods with that in Browning's '*Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came*.' Which shows the closer observation? What kind of details does each poet select?

Which are the most vivid details in the description?

Break, Break, Break. The circumstances of the composition of this poem are described in Tennyson's *Memoirs*, I, 190.

14. Why not here repeat line 2? Which line shows the better combination of vowels?

15–16. Meaning?

What are typified by the 'fisherman's boy' and the 'sailor lad,' and by the 'stately ships'?

Why have many critics regarded these lines as the profoundest expression of grief in English poetry?

Bugle Song. Mark carefully the wealth of suggestion in the song. Why is *splendor*, in line 1, a better word than *sunset* would be?

2. What is the suggestion of *old in story?*

16. *grow* is the important word in this line; the thought being that the lives of the lovers will be reëchoed and will 'grow' in those of the succeeding generation.

Select the lines where the sound echoes the sense.

What is gained by the use of the internal rhyme?

What variations in the refrain have been introduced? Are they skillfully arranged?

Tears, Idle Tears. 20. *Death in Life.* Explain.

What emotion is Tennyson here attempting to portray? What different qualities are attributed to the emotion?

What phrase is used as a refrain?

What meter is here employed? Why do we scarcely notice the absence of rhyme?

What means are employed for securing unity?

Study the fine balance of phrases, especially in lines 13–14.

In Memoriam, XV. This series of poems was written between 1842 and 1850 in memory of Arthur Henry Hallam, Tennyson's beloved friend at Cambridge. Hallam was a young man of noble nature, and of exceptional promise.

Read Sections XI, XII, and XIII, with which this is contrasted.

9–16. Explain.

Characterize the mood of the poem.

What is the most vivid detail in this description of nature?

Would the selection be clearer if the one sentence of which it is composed were broken up?

Into how many sentences should you divide it? Why did Tennyson use the single sentence?

XXX. 8. *mute Shadow.* Does this refer to Death or to his dead friend?

13–16. What are the poet's reasons for the repetitions in this stanza?

21–24. Of what lines in *Lycidas* are these a reflection?

Compare the mood with that in XV. Whence has sprung the hope?

Point out the effective use of contrast in this section.

Give in your own words Tennyson's conception, as here expressed, of the condition after death.

CXXXI. 1. By '*Living will*,' as Tennyson has explained, is meant 'free will in man,' which he regarded as our highest and most enduring

part. We must remember, however, that Tennyson believed that the human will is the supreme revelation of God by Himself.

3. *spiritual rock*. See 1 Cor. x, 4.

10. With this compare line 4 of the introduction to *In Memoriam*.

Stanza III summarizes well Tennyson's creed.

Is the thought here expressed loftier than that in the other two sections studied? How?

What is the stanzaic form here employed? Why is it especially good for such a series of poems?

The Brook. Though Tennyson said this was an imaginary brook, it closely resembles the brook described in the *Ode to Memory* which is known to have been the one near Somersby, Tennyson's birthplace. The two descriptions should be compared. This poem, though complete in itself, is part of a longer one (*The Brook*), which should be read entire to understand the setting.

1. *hern*, heron.

7. *thorps*, villages.

19. *fairy foreland*, tiny cape.

Note the melody, or tune of the verse, as affected by the vowels, the consonants (liquids and labials), the alliterations and assonances, the meter, the frequent double rhymes, the length of the stanza employed.

Where has Tennyson most successfully suggested the sound of the brook?

How has Tennyson given a human interest to the brook?

Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington. This ode first appeared in 1852, on the day of the Duke's funeral. It was twice revised for subsequent editions. The present text is that of the final revision of 1855.

42. *World-victor's victor*, conqueror of Napoleon.

49. *the cross of gold*. This is upon the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, in the crypt of which Lord Nelson and the Duke of Wellington are buried.

52. *Among the wise and bold*. Many military and naval heroes are buried in the cathedral.

59. Cf. *Macbeth*, V, viii, 50.

80–82. This thought is perhaps suggested by Is. lxiii. 1.

83. *Mighty Seaman*, Nelson.

99–101. What incidents in the life of Wellington are here referred to?

123. *loud Sabbath*, Waterloo, June 18, 1815.

137. *Baltic.* Campbell's *The Battle of the Baltic* commemorates this victory.

153. What two kinds of government did Tennyson dislike?

188. Who was Alfred the Great?

217. *To which our God, etc.*, Is. lx. 19.

What pairs of lines occurring twice (with variations) serve as a kind of refrain?

What is the metrical effect of the single rhyme and the long vowels in stanza III? Compare in *The Battle of the Baltic*, ll. 68-72,—

Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave!

What is the effect of the irregular meter in the lines describing the battle of Waterloo?

Which lines suggest by their sound the tolling of the bell?

Which lines suggest by their music the choral chant in the cathedral?

Compare with the thought of stanza VII that of Kipling's *Recessional.*

Where is the climax of the ode — in which stanza does the poem reach its emotional culmination?

This ode has been called 'the best poem on a national event that has ever been struck off by a Laureate under the sudden impatient spur of the moment.' What qualities in the *Ode* tend to justify this estimate?

The Charge of the Light Brigade. The charge here commemorated occurred at Balaklava in the Crimea, October 25, 1854. Scarcely a hundred and fifty, out of about six hundred and thirty, survived.

Of the four battle poems — *The Ballad of Agincourt*, *Hohenlinden*, *Naseby*, and this — which is the most stirring? Which is the most noble? Which is the most reflective? In which is the meter best adapted to express the thought?

To what emotions besides that of patriotism does this poem appeal? How does this poem compare in warmth and fervor with Tennyson's other poems?

Why is this probably the best known of the author's poems?

Milton. This poem is one of Tennyson's 'experiments in quantity.' The meter is an imitation of the Alcaic meter, so called from Alcæus, the inventor, a lyric poet of Mitylene in Lesbos.

The Alcaic meter consists of five feet — a spondee or iambus, an iambus, a long syllable, and two dactyls.

9. *Me rather.* Tennyson evidently preferred the fourth and fifth books of *Paradise Lost*.

Compare line 3 with line 10 of Wordsworth's *London, 1802*. Which better describes Milton's style?

By what means has Milton varied the regular Alcaic meter?

What is the most famous phrase in the poem?

What poem of Milton's previously read should you choose as best illustrating the appropriateness of this phrase?

Crossing the Bar. For an account of the composition of this poem see Tennyson's *Memoirs*, II, 367.

3. Explain this line. 9. With this contrast line 1.

15. *Pilot.* Meaning?

Was Tennyson's death such as he here desires?

Compare the attitude toward death with that expressed in Raleigh's *Even Such is Time*, and that in Waller's *Old Age*.

Why has this frequently been regarded as the most perfect of Tennyson's lyrics?

Should you judge that Tennyson polished his work? Give reasons for your answer.

Do his poems ever seem over-ornate?

Are there many lines that could be detached from the poems for quotation?

Compare Tennyson with Browning in respect to hopefulness, clarity of thought and expression, depth of thought. Which possessed the greater insight into human nature? Which was the better metrist?

Compare Tennyson with Wordsworth and with Burns in respect to their appreciation of nature, and their attitude towards it. Which interested Tennyson more — man or nature?

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